

Hitler's Third Reich – Issue 12

This page is to support the viewing of two-page within the .pdf viewer.

Originally published by Bright Star Publishing plc
Dalling Road, LONDON W6 0ES

Originally produced by Midsummer Books Ltd
Dalling Road, LONDON W6 0ES

This e-edition produced by
www.hitlersthirdreich.co.uk

HITLER'S

Third Reich

Volume
12

Monthly

Witness the terrible secrets of Germany's evil empire

Hitler's Youths

Nazis of the Future

Lidice

Nazi Revenge Massacre

North Africa 2

Rommel's Offensives

Buchenwald

Foretaste of Hell

Hitler and the Jews

Why did he hate them?

£2.95 Monthly

ISSN 1464-1968



UK £2.95
US \$3.25
Australia \$7.95
New Zealand \$8.95
South Africa R24.95
Singapore \$7.95
Malaysia Rp 17.95
Malta £m 1.95



HITLER'S Third Reich

Volume 12 Contents

- 1**
Secret Hitler Files
Hitler and the Jews
- 6**
The Holocaust
Buchenwald
- 12**
Inside the Third Reich
Hitler Youth
- 16**
Nazi Horrors
Hell's Fury: Massacre at Lidice
- 22**
Inside the Third Reich: Hitler's Henchmen
Keitel and Jodl: The Führer's Military Advisers
- 26**
Hitler's Battles 12
North Africa 2: The Race to Suez
- 32**
Hitler's War Machine
Early Panzers
- 40**
Nazi Symbols
NSKK
- 44**
A-to-Z of the Third Reich
'Kraft durch Freude' to 'Lebensraum'

Publisher: Stan Morse
Editor: Chris Bishop
Deputy editor: Adam Warner
Designer: Steve Horton
Illustrator: Peter Harper, Richard Burgess
Photography: David Tosh
Writers: Chris Bishop, Kurt Steiner, Adam Warner, William Wilson

Visit our Website on:

<http://www.hitlersthirdreich.co.uk>

Our thanks to Ulric of England (PO Box 285, Epsom, Surrey KT17 2YJ) for allowing us to photograph items from his extensive collection.

Picture acknowledgments

1: Popperfoto, US Holocaust Memorial Museum; 2: AKG London; 3: Popperfoto (four); 4: AKG (two); 5: Popperfoto, AKG (two), Popperfoto (two); 6: AKG; 6: USHMM (two), AKG (two), Popperfoto; 7: AKG, Aerospace Publishing; 8: AKG (two); 10: AKG (two); 11: Aerospace (two), AKG; 12: Topham Picturepoint; 13: Aerospace, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek; 14: Aerospace (two); 15: Aerospace (five); 16: Aerospace (two); 17: AKG, Suddeutscher Verlag (two); 18-21: CTK Foto, Prague; 22: Suddeutscher Verlag; 23: Suddeutscher Verlag, Aerospace; 24: Aerospace (two), Popperfoto; 25: Aerospace; 26-33: Aerospace; 34-39: Aerospace; 40-43: Aerospace; 44: Aerospace, Topham, AKG; 45: Aerospace (two), Popperfoto; 46: Popperfoto (two), Aerospace; 47: Aerospace (two), EWWF; 48: Aerospace, AKG, USHMM

Published monthly by
Bright Star Publishing plc
179, Dalling Road
London VV6 0ES

Produced by Midsummer Books Ltd
179, Dalling Road
London VV6 0ES
©1999 Midsummer Books Ltd

Colour reproduction by
Catalyst Publishing, Leamington Spa

Printed in Italy by Officine Grafiche De Agostini

This publication may not be reproduced in whole or in part in any form or by any means without the prior permission of Midsummer Books Ltd. All rights reserved. This publication may not be lent, resold, hired out or otherwise disposed of by way of trade at more than the recommended selling price shown on the cover, or in a mutilated condition.

UK and EIRE

Collect your copies of *Hitler's Third Reich* by placing a regular order with your newsagent today

Subscriptions

For information on how to take out a subscription, telephone Midsummer Subscription Service on 0181 735 1200 or e-mail to: subs@midsubs.com

Back Numbers

You can order back numbers from your newsagent, or by writing to:
Dept. H
Midsummer Subscription Services
PO Box 2822
Hammersmith
London W6 0BR

Each volume costs £2.95 Sterling (Ir£3.25)
Each volume including video series costs £5.95 Sterling (Ir£6.75)

Please make your cheques payable to

Midsummer Subscription Services
Credit card orders can be made by phone on 0181 735 1200

For wholesale trade distribution please contact
COMAG Magazine Marketing on 01895 444055

OVERSEAS MARKETS

Subscriptions (Australia & South Africa)

Australia: Contact: Midsummer Books Subscriptions (Dept.H), PO Box 460, EASTERN MC VIC 3110. Telephone: (03) 9872 4000. Fax: (03) 9872 5454. E-mail: bissett@bissettmags.com.au

South Africa: Contact: Midsummer Books Subscriptions (Dept.H), Private Bag 10, Centurion, 0046. Telephone: (011) 652 1835. Fax: (011) 314 2984. E-mail: subscribe@jacklin.co.za

Back numbers (Australia & NZ & South Africa)

You can order your back numbers from your local newsagent, or by writing to one of the following addresses:

Australia: Midsummer Books Back Numbers (Dept.H), Gordon & Gotch Ltd, Private Bag 290, Burwood, VIC 3125. Telephone: (03) 9805 1887. Please enclose payment of cover price, plus \$ 1.50 per issue postage & handling. Cheques should be made payable to Gordon & Gotch Ltd.

New Zealand: Midsummer Books (Dept.H), Gordon & Gotch (NZ) Ltd, P.O. Box 584, Auckland. Telephone: 09 625 3018. Please enclose payment of cover price, plus \$ 1.50 per issue postage & handling. Cheques should be made payable to Gordon & Gotch Ltd.

South Africa: Midsummer Books (Dept.H), Private Bag 10, Centurion, 0046. Telephone: (011) 652 1835. Fax: (011) 314 2984. E-mail: service@jacklin.co.za (please make cheques payable to Midsummer Subscription Services)

ISSN 1464-1976 (with video)
ISSN 1464-1968 (without video)



Adolf Hitler's fanatical hatred of Jews was ultimately the primary cause of one of the worst crimes in history: the Holocaust. There was already a strong current of anti-Semitism in central and Eastern Europe, but without Hitler it is unlikely that the genocidal murder of millions of Europe's Jews would have occurred. So why did he hate the Jews?

THERE ARE ALMOST as many explanations for the Hitler's pathological hatred of the Jews as there are historians writing about the Führer's early life.

There is a widespread belief that Hitler may have himself had Jewish blood, arising from claims by Hans Frank. Hitler's paternal grandfather, according to Frank who conducted a secret investigation in 1932 at Hitler's request, was an Austrian Jew named Frankenberger for whom Maria Anna Schicklgruber worked as a housemaid. There is some evidence that Frankenberger continued to make payments to Maria Anna after she left his employment. Hitler was always evasive about his past and may have been haunted by a fear that he was partly Jewish. However, Frank's testimony, given while awaiting trial and execution at Nuremberg, is the only source of this information, and he did not go into details. Nevertheless, it is true that as Hitler came to power he suppressed almost every detail of his family background beyond his immediate parents.

HITLER and the Jews



Adolf Hitler's anti-Semitism was more than a political gimmick: it inspired the 'Final Solution' to the 'Jewish Problem' which culminated in the gas chambers and crematoria of Auschwitz. But what caused such hatred?



Left: The young Adolf Hitler showed little evidence of being particularly anti-Jewish: in fact, he showed little evidence of any strong feelings, other than that the world owed him a living without his having to work for it.

Neither could they be called members of the Modernist school: all were classically-oriented painters.

According to Hitler himself, his violent anti-Semitism came about via a Damascene conversion on the streets of Vienna soon after his arrival in the Imperial city. In *Mein Kampf* he recorded seeing a Hassidic Jew from Eastern Europe – an apparition in a black caftan and with black sidelocks.

“‘Is this a Jew?’ I asked myself. Certainly they had not looked like this in Linz. I continued to observe the man carefully, but the longer I stared, examining feature by feature, the more my question changed to ‘Can this be a German?’”

By his own account, it was then that he began to read anti-Semitic books and pamphlets. This sort of material had been produced in Germany and Europe for over a century, and there was a strong racist movement in the Vienna of the time. However, the antipathy of German-speaking Austrians was not specifically aimed at Jews: Hungarians, Gypsies and Slavs, especially Czechs, were just as much victims of hatred and prejudice. However there are suggestions that he may have had more complex motives.

HITLER'S JEWISH FRIENDS

Curiously, there is absolutely no evidence that Hitler displayed any notable anti-Semitic traits during his Vienna years. If anything, the evidence points to his association with Jews by choice. This may have been simple pragmatism: he had certainly immersed himself in the Germanic racist culture which abounded in Vienna in those days, but Jews were among the few people who would help the struggling artist.

During the period he stayed in the mens' hostel at Brigittenau, he was friendly with Josef Neumann and Sigfried Löffner – who were both Jewish. August Kubizek, his boyhood friend, took the young Adolf to musical evenings at the house of Doctor Rudolf Jahoda, the wealthy Jewish director of a chemicals factory.

According to Kubizek, Hitler enjoyed the evenings tremendously. It was at this time that a prominent anti-Semitic faction in the Viennese musical world set their sights on Gustav Mahler, but in spite of a vicious smear campaign, Hitler admired the Jewish composer and conductor for his interpretations of Wagner.

Hitler also relied on Jews to sell his

Another school of thought holds that Hitler was turned against Jews by the doctor who treated his mother for cancer. Watching his mother die slowly and painfully while being gouged by a charlatan is supposed to have been the root cause of his anti-semitism. Unfortunately, the facts point in the opposite direction. Dr Bloch, a relative of Franz Kafka, remembered the young Hitler as being extremely polite, and grateful for his efforts. Indeed, Bloch had been very attentive to Klara and significantly undercharged for his visits. Hitler sent him two postcards expressing his thanks which the doctor kept.

NOBLE JEW

More to the point, when the Nazis took control of Austria in 1938, Bloch was given special treatment on the direct instructions of the Führer. Hitler even called him a “noble Jew”, and gave the Doctor and his wife a

special dispensation, allowing them to sell their property and giving them an exemption from the crippling emigration tax when they moved to the USA.

The third great theory explaining Hitler's anti-Semitism is that he had vowed revenge on the Jewish professors who had blocked his entry into Vienna's Academy of Visual Arts in 1907. Jews were indeed over-represented in Vienna's further education establishments – but not in the Academy of Visual Arts. It was a conservative place, and over 80 percent of the student body were German speakers.

The 18-year-old Adolf arrived in the Imperial city from Linz carrying a pile of drawings. They were good enough to get him into the Academy's drawing exam – which he failed. But it was not the Jewish professors who were at fault: none of the seven members of the faculty who judged his skills to be inadequate were Jewish.



Jews in Austria

JEWES HAVE LIVED in Vienna since the 12th Century. In common with other Jewish communities in Europe, they were subject to centuries of persecution and expulsion, but they always seemed to survive, latterly in the Leopoldstadt quarter of the city.

Austria's Jews were emancipated in 1867. For the first time, they were allowed to live and work where they wanted, and they were no longer barred from University places and government employment. The result was a population explosion. In 1860, no more than 6,000 Jews lived in the city. Ten years later this had risen to 40,000; by the time Adolf Hitler lived in Vienna, in 1910, the Jewish community had increased to 170,000, or about nine percent of the city's population. And these were just the religious Jews: many more had been assimilated or baptised as Christians.

Vienna's Jews proved hard workers. But their increasing presence in the professions, in higher education and in the arts seemed a threat to German-speaking Austrians, and this fear was picked up and used by anti-Semitic politicians like Karl Luger.

But the real rise anti-Semitism came in the 1880s and 1890s with the mass immigration of tens of thousands of Eastern Jews. Fleeing from pogroms in Russia. They looked different and spoke a different language, and were convenient scapegoats to be blamed for the ills of society, from theft to white slavery and prostitution.



Above: The first wave of eastern Jews to arrive in Austria came in the 1880s. Hundreds of thousands fled pogroms in Russia, started because 'Jewish revolutionaries' had assassinated Tsar Alexander II.



Above: The notion that 'caftan Jews' profited from selling girls into prostitution was one of the things which infuriated the young Adolf Hitler. In fact, Orthodox Jews were implicated in several 'white slavery' cases around the turn of the century – but though the Viennese gutter press claimed that they preyed on German-speaking Christians, their victims were generally poor girls from their own immigrant community.



Above: Unlike the assimilated Jews already in the Austrian empire, the new arrivals kept to themselves and to their old ways. Known as 'caftan Jews', their obvious differences made them an easy target for hatred.

Below: Many western Jews were as hostile to the immigrants as the Germans and the Czechs. They saw the new arrivals, with their stubborn determination to hold on to orthodox ways, as threatening their own hard-won equality.





paintings. He worked through several Jewish dealers, but had a particularly close relationship with Samuel Morgenstern, who found the aspiring young artist a number of customers in Vienna's Jewish middle class. However, 30 years later Morgenstern was to be deported to the Lodz ghetto, where he died in 1943. He wrote to Hitler asking for assistance, but the letter was intercepted by bureaucrats and never reached the Führer.

HITLER IN MUNICH

If there was anything which moved Hitler in those aimless days it was his belief in the Pan-German ideal. He hated Vienna – as the capital of a multi-ethnic empire, it had large populations of Jews, Slavs and Hungarians, who he felt were stealing the country from German-speaking Austrians. At the first opportunity, he decided, he would move to Germany. But that would not be until he reached the age of 24, when under Austrian law he was entitled to the inheritance left to him by his father.

Once he had the money – about 820 kronen, enough to keep him for a year – he moved to Munich. There he carried on in the same aimless fashion: reading voraciously, not working any more than he had to, and scratching a living by selling paintings copied from postcards.

Hitler's enthusiasm for the cause of a greater Germany saw him volunteering for service in the Bavarian army on the

outbreak of World War I. He was a brave soldier, although he was remembered by his comrades as being a little strange. But none of them recalled the future dictator as being particularly anti-semitic.

It seems that it was not until Hitler was recuperating from a gas attack at the end of the war that he decided that the Jews were responsible for all of Germany's ills. Losing the war had hit Hitler like a thunderbolt. How could it happen, when the German people were superior?

With the central support of his world view knocked away, he needed a scapegoat, and given the latent anti-Semitism which had been festering since his days in Vienna, it appears that he selected the Jews. Not only were they a separate race, they were also intimately associated with the revolutionaries who had turned the politics of postwar Germany into a maelstrom.

The *Dolchstoßtheorie* – Stab in the Back Theory – claimed that Germany had been destroyed from within, and had not been beaten in the field of battle. Theorists blamed the defeat on "Jews, traitors and Social Democrats". Rosa Luxemburg in Berlin and Kurt Eisner in Munich, were both murdered in 1919 because they were Bolsheviks urging revolutionary change, but were subsequently portrayed as anti-German Jewish agitators.

Hitler was employed as an Army spy in

Above: Hitler stands with fellow right-wing leaders at Nuremberg's 'German Day', a celebration of nationalism which took place in September 1923. By this time the one-time drifter had become a political force – and driving his campaigns was his hatred of Jews

Above left: Hitler on the road with early members of the NSDAP. While his own hatred was the prime mover in the Holocaust to come, Hitler would never have succeeded had not his rabble-rousing anti-Semitic message struck a chord with many ordinary people in Munich, Bavaria and all over Germany.

Munich after the war. Assigned to infiltrate a far right group known as the German Worker's Party, he discovered an unsuspected gift for oratory. Part of that gift was in knowing what his audiences wanted to hear – and what they wanted to hear was anybody who attacked the Jews and socialists who had, in their view, brought Germany to its knees. This was no problem for the aspiring politician, who had come to the same conclusion himself.

HITLER: MAN OF DESTINY?

For the first time, people listened to Hitler with respect, and his own belief that he was a man of destiny was enhanced. For the first time, he knew exactly where he was going, and who his enemies were. Riding a wave of anti-Jewish and anti-socialist fervour, Adolf Hitler had embarked on his extraordinary political career. It was a career which would take him to the heights of power before plunging Germany into ruin – and German Jews into Hell.



Hitler's Vienna

THE YOUNG HITLER would have been familiar with the opinions of Karl Luger (1844 – 1910), the mayor of Vienna and a virulent anti-Semite. Hitler was a voracious reader of newspapers, and Luger was quoted extensively in the right-wing press. He had become mayor in 1887 and held this post until his death. He was eloquent, domineering and immensely popular. Hitler would say of him in *Mein Kampf* that he was "the last great German to be born in Ostmark".

At this time the 18-year-old Hitler may also have been reading articles in the racist journal *Ostara* edited by Jörg Lanz von Liebenfels (1874 – 1954). Liebenfels, a former novice at the Holy Cross Monastery, was an advocate of racial purity. He divided the world into the white,

blonde, blue-eyed Nordics whom he called either *Asinge* – German gods, *Heldlinge* – Heroes, or *Arioheroiker* – Aryan Heroes; and the other races whom he called *Chandalas* from the Urdu for 'Untouchable'. These he further divided into *Afflinge* – Monkey People – and *Schrätlinge* or *Hobgoblins*.

Customers at the Café Zur Goldenen Kugel – The Golden Bowl Cafe – remembered the young Hitler as a passionate defender of Liebenfels' views. However there is absolutely no evidence that he visited the editor and requested back copies, as Liebenfels was to state 30 years later. Indeed, when the old racist claimed to be the Führer's mentor in 1933, Hitler was not pleased and had Liebenfels' works banned.

Right: Karl Luger, the anti-Semitic Mayor of Vienna at the turn of the century. Luger was very important to Adolf Hitler; in later life the Führer was to hold up Luger as an example of a man able to use words to inflame a mass audience.



Above: Viennese life as depicted in operettas and by Hollywood. But this was a life limited to the wealthy: the poor had few opportunities to dress up and waltz the night away to the tunes of Strauss waltzes.



Above: When Hitler eventually came to live in Vienna, however, it was not amid the glorious architecture that he would live: the houses in Mariahilf, where he first took a room, often presented a striking facade. But inside and round the back they were cramped, dirty and insanitary.



Above: Vienna's Academy of Visual Arts, designed by Theophilus Hansen. Hitler walked out of the main entrance in October 1907, having failed the Academy's drawing examination.

Below: Hitler first visited Vienna in 1906, and it left a lasting impression. He was to recall, "It was the buildings which held my interest. For hours I would stand in front of the Opera, for hours I would gaze at Parliament: the whole Ringstrasse seemed like an enchantment."





BUCHENWALD

"To write about this place, you must have been here at least two years. But if you survive that long... you don't want to write any more"

Buchenwald survivor interviewed by Edward R Murrow, 10 April 1945

American troops of General George S. Patton's Third Army entered Buchenwald camp on 11 April 1944. It was one of the first of the major camps to be liberated by the Western Allies, and the shocking scenes found there were to be repeated many times in the weeks that followed.

IN THE HILLS less than 10 km from Weimar, the concentration camp of Buchenwald was near the oak, which the poet Goethe reputedly visited, and not far from the homes of Schiller and Liszt. Sited next to one of the shrines of German freedom and culture, as Weimar's tourist brochures describe it, Buchenwald was the scene of some of the most hideous barbarity perpetrated by the Nazis.

It was one of the main pre-war concentration camps, designed to handle prisoners from central Germany – the others were Sachsenhausen, in the north, and Dachau, in the south.

In the twelve years of its existence an estimated 56,000 people were killed at Buchenwald. The camp's

capacity reached 70,000 at the end of 1944 although there were just 21,000 inmates left alive when the US Army liberated the camp a year later; many of these were on the verge of death.

HARD LABOUR

Buchenwald was not an extermination camp, built for murder on an industrial scale; the prisoners were there to provide slave labour. Some men endured its horrors for years: a handful freed in 1945 had been there since before the war. They tended to have special skills that the Nazis needed, but all came close to arbitrary execution on many occasions. The regime at Buchenwald was so insane that the slaves on which Hitler's economy depended were frequently tortured to death for the sadistic entertainment of their guards.

Before the war the camps were mainly used to hold Communists, social democrats and other opponents of the Nazi rise to power. The regime was very harsh: back-breaking labour, bad food and frequent beatings from the guards. Inmates were released, broken in spirit if not in body, their refusal to tell anyone about their experiences adding to the terrifying reputation of the camps.

Jews were singled out for much worse treatment, SS men beating them to death on a whim. Gerd Treuhaft was an inmate in Buchenwald in 1938 when the camp was suddenly filled with Jewish men rounded up during *Kristallnacht*. He recalled with horror how the guards repeatedly entered the barracks and dragged someone outside to have their limbs broken with steel rods. All night there were screams, cries

and the occasional pistol shot to conclude the savagery.

Once the war started inmates from Buchenwald were sent to work in factories in Weimar, Erfurt and Jena. From 1940 they worked alongside forced labourers from Poland and western Europe. Until manufacture was transferred to the underground factory and concentration camp 'Dora' late in 1944, Buchenwald inmates also worked on the V2 ballistic missile programme.

NOT JUST THE SS

At their work sites, the slaves were under the control of ordinary German civilians – technicians, foremen, factory managers. Their skeletal bodies, evidence of frequent violence and eventual disappearance was hardly a secret. When the US



Above left: Prisoners arriving at Buchenwald are processed by the SS. At its peak late in 1944, there were more than 80,000 inmates in Buchenwald and the 150 or more sub-camps it controlled.

Above: Conditions in Buchenwald were always bad, but the death rate soared in the last months of the war as thousands of sick and starving evacuees arrived from camps closer to the advancing Russians.

Above: Buchenwald means 'Beech Wood' in German, and there were plenty of trees in the area. But there was little time to study nature for any party of inmates taken into the forest: either they were being lined up by their SS guards for hard labour, or they were about to be shot.

Army liberated the region, the contrast between well-fed Germans in adjacent villages and the living dead of Buchenwald was all too obvious. But no-one would admit to knowing anything about what went on behind the wire.

NAZI WORRIES

Justice Minister Dr Gürtner and Minister of the Interior Dr Frick suspected the truth about the early camps but did not visit one until 1938. They were concerned at the unbelievable number of inmates who were reported dead, 'shot while trying to escape'. Himmler, oozing injured innocence, replied to their queries in May of that year.

"The day before yesterday I was in Buchenwald camp and was shown the body of a fine 24-year-old SS man whose skull had been smashed with a shovel by a pair of criminals." He would have them believe that the *Totenkopf* guards needed to shoot prisoners for their own self-preservation.



Above: Although Buchenwald was not an extermination site, the death rate amongst inmates was so high that the camp needed an industrial-sized crematorium to dispose of the bodies.



Above: In the early days of the camp, Buchenwald prisoners were used to provide unskilled labour. Once war broke out, however, increasing numbers were worked to death in armaments factories.

By this time, however, the state authorities had been completely neutralized. Bizarrely, the next legal threat to Buchenwald would come from within the SS – from its own legal department.

From 1943, when the inmates at Buchenwald became too sick to work – almost inevitable given their pathetic rations and

insanitary living conditions – they were shipped to Auschwitz to be gassed. After the closure of the extermination camps late in 1944, the sick were put to death at Buchenwald itself, in block 61. The favoured method of murder was to hold the emaciated victim down and stab him in the heart with a large syringe of phenol.

The bodies were cremated on the spot, the ashes thrown into the excrement pits that were periodically dug out to provide fertilizer for the neighbouring fields. "Work," said one survivor, "whatever it might be, was the inmate's only chance of survival. As soon as they were no longer of use, they were done for".



Above: In spite of the poor food, insanitary conditions and brutality of the SS guards, Buchenwald had an effective resistance movement. Inspired in the main by communist inmates, prisoners like this managed to take control of the camp hours before the arrival of the US army.

Below: Russian forced labourers at Buchenwald. Before their incarceration the weight of these men averaged around 70 kilos; those who survived to greet the Allies rarely weighed more than 40 kilos.



Another survivor, Eugen Kogon, described how much of the 'work' in Buchenwald was no more than torture: back-breaking labour like building walls only to tear them down and start again, or carrying sacks of wet salt too and fro for no reason other than to exhaust the prisoners. Anyone too tired to carry on could be put to death in as disgusting a manner as the watching SS men could devise.

HIMMLER VISIT

Heinrich Himmler visited Buchenwald in May 1943 and was disappointed with the camp's high death rate. After the wholesale slaughter of Russian prisoners-of-war in the winter of 1941-2, it had belatedly dawned on the Reichsführer SS that the several million able-bodied men the Nazis had just killed would have made valuable slave labourers. Germany's manpower shortage worsened the following year, and he became concerned at camps like Buchenwald where the commandants failed to grasp his change of heart.

Himmler laid down a three-stage incentive scheme for the inmates – the fourth, unspoken one being death for failure to meet 'norms' laid down by the relevant factory foremen. An inmate who exceeded his quota would receive extra rations. As the normal daily ration was little more than a single slice of black bread, a smearing of butter and watery turnip soup, such generosity would not eat into Germany's food stocks.

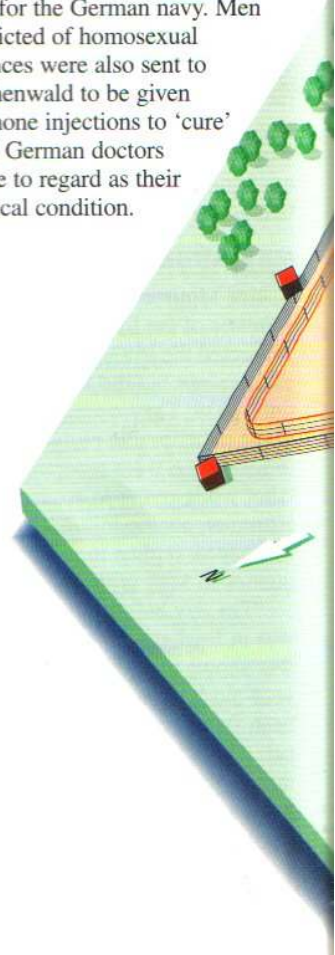
CAMP BROTHEL

The second stage, for hard-working inmates was the payment of some derisory wage, 30-40 pfennigs a day. The third was a visit to the camp brothel. Buchenwald still did not have one, and Himmler demanded one be set up. Such facilities were provided in many camps, always for the SS guards, sometimes for the kapos and now for willing prisoners. The girls were usually teenagers abducted from occupied eastern Europe.

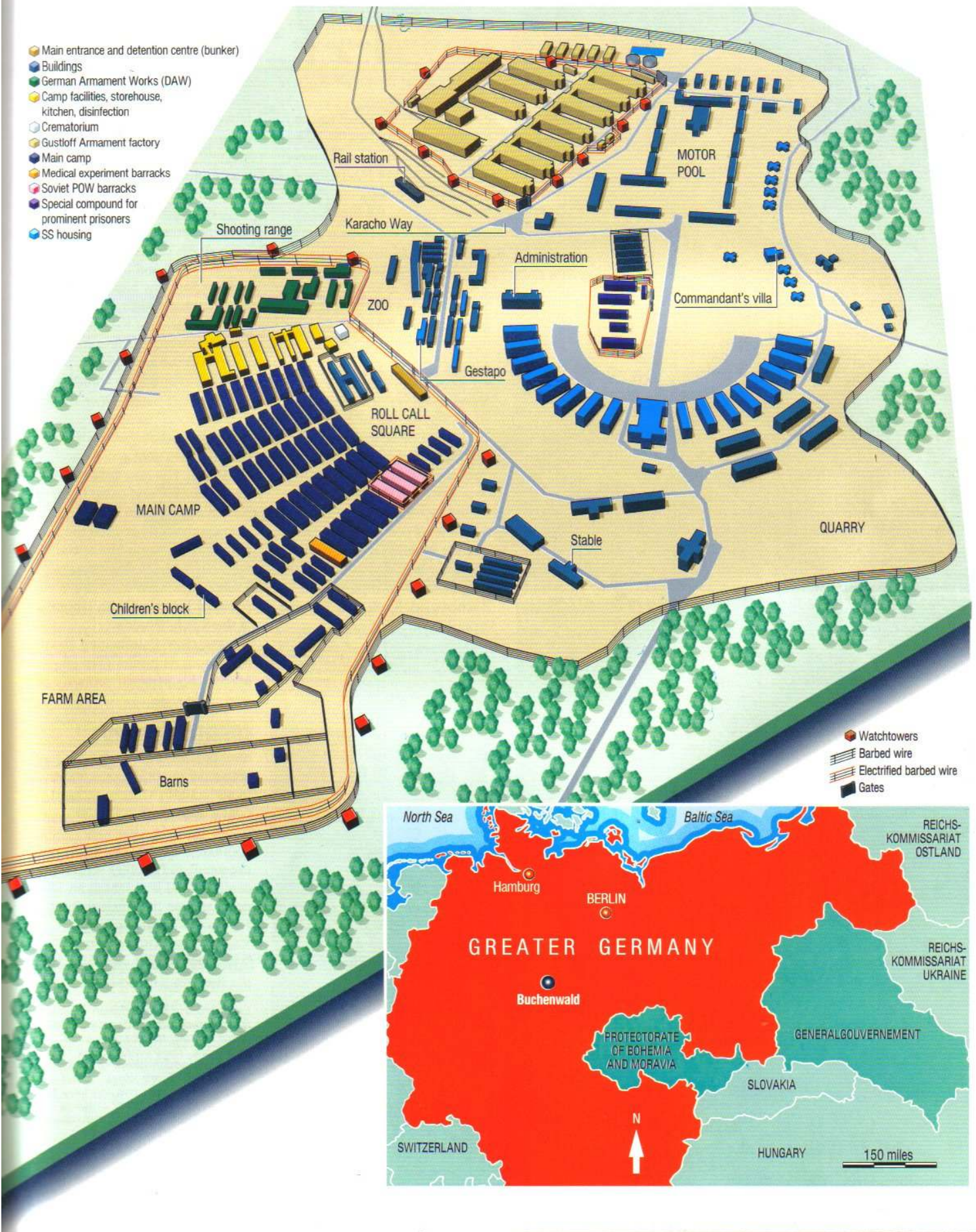
Some inmates at Buchenwald, like Dr Alfred Balochowsky, worked on typhus vaccines for the German armed forces. Tests, held in block 46, were conducted on other prisoners. Blood was drawn from men infected with typhus when the fever reached its height, then 5-10 millilitres was intravenously injected into healthy men. Their blood was taken in turn to infect other men. None were treated for the disease; their function was to provide a constant supply of typhus germs on which to test various vaccines.

BURNED FOR SCIENCE

Other medical experiments were even more nauseating. In the name of science and medicine, Allied prisoners-of-war were tied down and burned with phosphorous. Russians were preferred since they were believed to be physically tougher and, in any case, were regarded as racial inferiors by their murderers. Others were placed on a diet of salt water only, their death agonies providing medical data for the German navy. Men convicted of homosexual offences were also sent to Buchenwald to be given hormone injections to 'cure' what German doctors chose to regard as their medical condition.



BUCHENWALD COMPLEX





Above: General Dwight D. Eisenhower visited Buchenwald soon after its liberation. He later recalled his emotions on being confronted with piles of emaciated bodies: "I have never been able to describe my emotional reaction when I came face to face with indisputable evidence of Nazi brutality and ruthless disregard for human decency."

Presiding over this Hell on Earth was SS-*Standartenführer* Karl 'Karli' Koch and his wife Ilse. Koch's claim to fame is that he was one of the handful of concentration camp commandants executed by the SS before the Allies could hang him. His crime? Corruption. In the contrary world of Nazi Germany, medals up to and including the Knight's Cross, the highest award for bravery, were given to SS men for acts of mass murder. Corruption was endemic in the Nazi state, from Goering and the Gauleiters down to the humblest party officials. Most 'Golden Pheasants' got away with it.

SS INVESTIGATION

Standartenführer Koch's nemesis was a 34-year-old officer in the SD's financial crimes unit, Konrad Morgen. Once an assistant SS judge, Morgen had been posted to the Russian front for his excessive zeal in applying the SS legal code. In 1943 he was brought back to Germany where he was ordered to investigate allegations of corruption at Buchenwald. Koch was allowing

civilian companies to hire out inmates for extortionate fees, and pocketing the cash.

Staying at Hitler's favourite hotel in Weimar, 'The Elephant', Morgen visited Buchenwald where he saw what the commandant wanted him to. Healthy prisoners worked in conditions comparable to the German prison service, and enjoyed similar amenities – better even, now they had a brothel. But areas of the camp remained closed to him and the prisoners whose testimony had sparked his investigation had all mysteriously died. The dates of their deaths varied widely and the causes of death were unconvincing.

Morgen knew the witnesses had been murdered. Once he checked local banks and discovered Koch had made massive cash deposits, he headed for Berlin. His boss refused to touch the case and passed him to Kaltenbrunner who characteristically ducked the issue too, referring him to the SS legal department. The tenacious Morgen managed to secure a personal interview with Himmler at the Reichsführer's headquarters. Fulminating about SS honour, Himmler granted Morgen his personal authority to pursue the case.

CORRUPT GUARDS

Standartenführer Koch was convicted in an SS court and shot in early 1945. Morgen secured convictions of several other senior officials – the commandant of Majdenek was executed, and another senior camp official was sent to an SS penal unit on the Russian front. He also laid charges against Koch's wife. Known as the 'Witch of Buchenwald', 39-year-old Ilse was a broad-shouldered



Left: Around 800 children – moved from Auschwitz in January 1945 – were among the Buchenwald survivors. They were housed in Block 66, which came to be known as the 'Children's Block'. Most survived the war, though very few were ever to see their families again. Here some of the children prepare to be repatriated to France after the liberation.



HUMAN ORNAMENTS



Amongst the most horrific evidence presented at the war crimes trials were those human remains which had been used by the SS as ornaments. Shrunk heads were hung up in the centre of Buchenwald to serve as a warning to inmates to behave (though in 1942 the local SS medical officer at Weimar protested, saying that the *Totenkopf* guards were going too far).

Worse, perhaps, was the evidence that humans were flayed and their skins used as ornaments such as book covers and lampshades. Items shown at Nuremberg were tested by forensic pathologists, who confirmed that they were human skin. The SS medical staff claimed that the skin had only been taken from dead inmates, and had been used for research, but witnesses testified that guards, including the infamous Ilse Koch, had inmates with interesting tattoos killed so that their skin could be taken.



red head who amused herself by riding on horseback through the camp, whipping any inmates that caught her eye. She was also rumoured to collect human skin, especially if decorated with elaborate tattoos. Prisoners found with tattoos she liked were killed by lethal injection then skinned to produce lampshades and book covers. Curiously, although the charge is widely repeated, and human skin artefacts were recovered from Buchenwald and elsewhere, Morgen rejected this charge during the war and refused to testify in Frau Koch's post-war trial.

'WITCH' OF BUCHENWALD

In 1947 Ilse Koch was sentenced to life imprisonment for mass murder by an American tribunal dealing the Buchenwald guards. This was commuted to four years and she was released, having given birth to a son, Uwe, in prison. The identity of the father remains a mystery. Re-arrested in 1949 by the West German

authorities, she was again sentenced to life imprisonment. The court heard overwhelming evidence of her personal involvement in the murder of inmates. Psychiatrists examined her, pronouncing her a 'perverted, nymphomaniacal, hysterical, power-mad demon'. Held at Aichach women's prison in Bavaria, she committed suicide in 1967 by hanging herself with her bed sheet.

Himmler had cheated the hangman in 1945, biting into a cyanide capsule after his capture by British soldiers. Just before his death, he had been shown photographs from Buchenwald and Belsen – the piles of emaciated corpses that stunned the world in 1945. 'Am I responsible for the excesses of my subordinates?' he asked.

Right: Although not an official extermination centre, over 50,000 prisoners died at Buchenwald. When the Americans arrived to liberate the camp in April 1945, they found 21,000 survivors.



INSIDE THE THIRD REICH



Hitler's Youth

THE FÜHRER'S
FUTURE

A member of the Hitler Youth beats his drum on the Marienburg in East Prussia. The Nazi youth organisation made particular use of 'desirable' music in the pageantry which cloaked its meetings.



Adolf Hitler told the Youth bearing his name that they were to be the harbingers of a brave new world. Young Germans, male and female alike, proudly donned the Nazi uniform and swore allegiance to the *hakenkreuz*.

YOUTH MOVEMENTS had existed in Germany before the Nazis came to power. Some had a religious background, others were secular while a few were allied to political groups.

The longest established was the *Wandervögel* (Wandering or Migratory Bird), a youth group set up in Berlin in the late 19th Century by Herman Hoffmann and Karl Fischer.

They had a 'back to nature' philosophy. They wanted to reverse the materialism created by the industrial world, which many saw as being tainted with Jewish capital, returning to the woods and lakes of Germany's Teutonic past. Their goal was to revive romantic idealism and nationalism. They greeted fellow travellers with a cheerful 'Heil' and an arm raised in a waved salute. The *Wandervögel* was formally established in 1901, with membership reserved for grammar school boys. By 1914 the movement had 25,000 members in various groups throughout Germany. During World War I over 7,000 were killed in action.

WANDERVÖGEL

After the war the *Wandervögel* were succeeded by the better organised *Bünde* (Leagues). During the 1920s the *Bünde* became politicised. The young men fought in the endemic street brawls with their political rivals. Every major and fledgling political party had a Youth group annexed to it. The SPD (Social

Democrats) and KPD (Communists) found a considerable following among the urban working class, by 1933 the SPD and KPD had 803,000 members. Another of the *Bünde* sub-groups was the *Knappesnschaft* (The Young Noviates) who denounced the iniquities of the Treaty of Versailles and attacked Jews and Marxists. In 1920 Hitler, newly appointed head of the National Socialist Workers Party (NSDAP), authorised the formation of his own Youth League under the control of his storm trooper organisation, the SA. The first Leader was the very capable Gustav Lenk.

EXIT LENK

Lenk took part in the abortive Putsch in 1923, and was an inmate with Adolf Hitler at Landsberg prison. But Lenk had become disenchanted with Hitler, and attempted to go his own way, taking the youth organisation with him. The Nazis quickly disposed of the threat. The new leader replacing Lenk was Kurt Gruber, a law student who had headed the *Sächsische Nationalsozialistische Jugend* (Saxon National Socialist Youth) in Plauen.

The new youth wing of the reformed National Socialist party was set up as a branch of the *Sturmabteilung* and was known as the *Jungsturm Adolf Hitler*. It first appeared in public on 28 January 1923, and received pennants from Adolf Hitler.

It was in 1926 that the notorious Gauleiter Julius



Above: 'Pomp and circumstance' – the youth rallies, as with the Nazi creed in general, were big on show but light on substance. The British ambassador in Berlin, wrote of one Nuremberg show: "for grandiose beauty I have never seen anything to compare with it".

Below: The lederhosen-clad lawyer Kurt Gruber possessed considerable administrative abilities, and did much to establish the Hitler Youth. But in the machiavellian world of Nazi power politics he fell victim to the wildly ambitious Baldur von Schirach.





Above: German youth was given plenty of toys to play with. From field sports to motor racing, every activity was designed to have an ultimate military purpose. Today's gliding enthusiast was to become tomorrow's bomber pilot.

Below: The patrician, effeminate and flabby Baldur von Schirach was also a self-styled poet. His utter devotion to the Führer led him once to proclaim: "Loyalty is everything and everything is the love of Adolf Hitler".



Streicher christened the youth movement the *Hitler Jugend* (HJ).

In the early years of the HJ loyalty to the Führer was not absolute and party members of who sided with the radical Strasser brothers formed the National Socialist Workers and Peasant Youth (NSABJ), though this fell by the wayside as Hitler consolidated control.

VON SCHIRACH EMERGES

Although Gruber was enjoying much success, an ambitious young upstart was soon competing for his position. Baldur von Schirach had joined the Nazi Party at 18 upon first hearing Hitler speak. Educated at the best German schools, he quickly came to the Führer's attention. The Nazi hierarchy tended to poke fun at him because of his upper class, schoolboy looks. But young Schirach and his wealthy family enjoyed Hitler's friendship and confidence.

In July 1928, Schirach was appointed Leader of the Nazi Student Association. The ambitious young Schirach soon set his sights on gaining control of the HJ as well. He fostered links with Ernst Röhm, the burly and influential SA leader.

In 1931, the outmanoeuvred Gruber was forced to hand in his resignation. Baldur von Schirach became the youth leader. Under his guidance the HJ grew into a fantastically large operation. Von Schirach was awarded the title *Reichsjugendführer* in 1933 to reflect his increased status as head of all German youth.

FORCED MERGER

When Hitler came to power the policy of *Gleichschaltung* – 'Co-ordination of the Political Will' – was instituted. By the end of the year *Gleichschaltung* had led to the establishment of new state and social institutions under Nazi control. With the exception of the Catholic Youth Movement, within 18 months existing youth groups in Germany were absorbed into the Nazi youth organisations. The Catholic

groups survived until 1939, protected by the terms of a concordat with Rome.

From an organisation with 100,000 members in 1932 the HJ increased thirty-three times within two years, making it the largest youth movement in the Western world.

Von Schirach set about reorganising the HJ after its takeover of the other youth movements. From 1933 the movement consisted of the *Jungvolk* and the *Hitler Jugend*, and for girls the *Jungmädel* and the *Bund Deutscher Mädel* (BdM), the German Girls' League.

By 15 March of the year in which they reached their tenth birthday every German youngster was required to register with the Reich Youth Headquarters. After a thorough investigation of the boy's record and that of his family, with special attention to his racial purity, he was admitted to the *Deutsches Jungvolk*. Any parent who failed to co-operate and give their child to Hitler could be interned in a concentration camp.

Although the Nazis advocated a philosophy of *selbstführung* (self-direction) for its youth, this disguised the true nature of affairs, which was to establish the total control of youth by the state.

HARD AS KRUPP STEEL

The boys in the *Jungvolk* were known as *Pimpf* and were required to pass an initiation test to enter. This consisted of repeating condensed versions of Nazi dogma known as *Schwertworte* (Sword Words) and all the verses of the Horst Wessel Lied. They were required to run 60 metres in 12 seconds, take part in a cross country hike for a day and a half, know semaphore, lay field telephone cable and participate in small arms drill. Membership of the HJ proper covered boys between 14 and 18.

The Hitler Jugend became a state agency on 1 December 1936 and membership was made



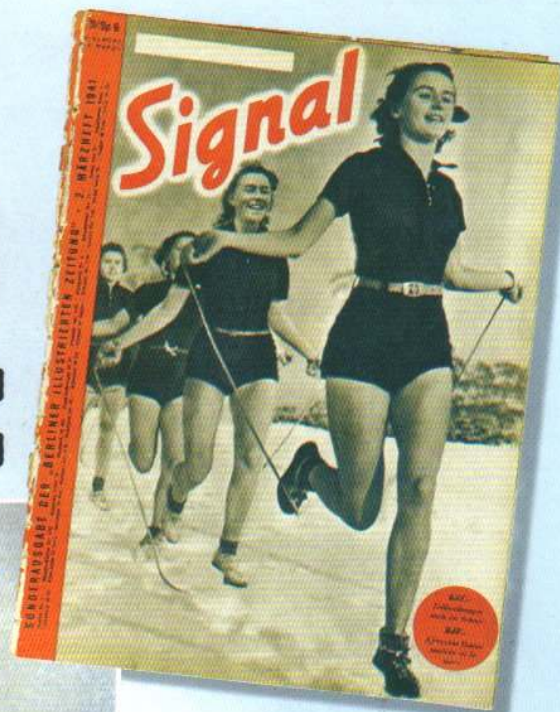
Glaube und Schönheit

THE SPECIAL *Glaube und Schönheit* or 'Faith and Beauty' programme was established by Baldur von Schirach in January 1938. It was an attempt to counter the fall-off in interest of older German girls in the organised activities provided by the BdM. Its existence also owed much to the Nazi belief in putting women in their assigned place. For Hitler, "A woman must be a cute, cuddly, naive little thing – tender, sweet and stupid". German women had to learn to assume and carry out her duties to the *Volk* community with joy and without criticism.

The course was open only to those between 17 and 21. Its rationale was to create a master race of perfect *hausfrauen*. This was to be realised by cultivating the virtues of personal hygiene, housekeeping, education and home decorating. The *Glaube und Schönheit* handbook for 1943 included recipes, the birth dates of Nazi heroes and pictures of von Schirach and Hitler's mother. The core home-making skills were supplemented by intensive physical activity, especially dance and gymnastics. Fashion consciousness and feminine aesthetics were also part of the programme, even though this went against the spirit of previous Nazi strictures against make-up. The Nazis were always fond of contrasting the refreshingly simple Aryan beauty with the heavily 'disguised' female of the decadent western democracies.

The scheme enjoyed less than qualified success. As the war progressed, Faith and Beauty's ideals of grace and charm, far removed from reality, lost their attraction in the deadly seriousness of daily life.

Right and far right: German womanhood is instructed in the fine art of self-presentation. The female must make herself as attractive as possible for her warrior mate. Magda Goebbels, the Propaganda Minister's wife was held up as an aspirational role model for the fair sex. She had borne six children while retaining her elegant appearance.



Above left and above: Germany's place in history was to be assured by warriors bred from women fit in mind and body. During the war, however, German women were to use this power in such graceless tasks as munitions work and air-raid duties.





Above: Nazi coffers were exhausted by the constant electioneering in the early 1930's. All personnel were impressed into collecting funds for further political action. The HJ was itself bankrupt and doorstep collections were vital. The crisis was only resolved when von Schirach siezed the funds of rival youth groups early in 1933.

compulsory. By 1935 the HJ was a huge organisation which embraced almost 60 per cent of German youth. In its early years it offered something for everyone. The activities offered to the HJ was constantly being enlarged and diversified.

Links with the armed forces were intensified, and most activities had some kind of military purpose. In the Flieger-HJ, aviation enthusiasts built gliders, participated in annual glider flying competitions, visited Luftwaffe facilities and went for rides in fighters and bombers. The Motor-HJ for boys 16 and older allowed them to acquire their driver's license and learn to ride motorcycles. Members of the Marine-HJ obtained sailing certificates, learned river navigation, practiced small boat handling, and participated in naval exercises aboard Kriegsmarine training ships.

Right: The HJ were omnipresent in the streets throughout Germany during the Nazi rise to power. With the SA, they sought to present a picture of strength, discipline and order. Using fists and firearms alike they took part in street battles with opposition youth which accounted for 23 HJ deaths between 1931 and 1933.

These attractions weaned the boys away from the comforts of home and conservative parental influence and familiarised them with group activities – ideal preparation for the armed forces. Hitler wanted his Youth to be "as tough as leather and as hard as Krupp steel." From the beginning his followers were creating a force that was to be the agent of his destiny.

KINDE, KIRCHE, KÜCHE

Girls in the age group 10 to 13 initially joined the *Jungmädel* (Young Girls) – the junior section of the BdM. Their rather austere uniform consisted of a long skirt, white blouse, neckerchief and short jacket. It was known as *Kluft* – clothes.

Membership of the BdM was initially open to girls between 14 and 17. The aim of the BdM's educational program was to make all German girls into perfect



proponents of National Socialism. As with the HJ, the virtues required of every girl included obedience, fulfilment of duty, discipline, self sacrifice, and physical fitness .

After 1938, special units for girls from 17 to 21 were also set up – propagating the so-called 'Faith and Beauty' regime.

In common with the transmission of Nazi ideology elsewhere, emphasis on training the future mothers of Germany was placed on the body rather than the mind. Only strong, healthy women would be able to fulfil their duties and embody the desired racial ideal.

After the reintroduction of compulsory military service in 1935, the tasks of the BdM were broadened. Shortages in the labour force meant that many women became apprentices in the armaments industries. However, for the time being, the

central focus of BdM activities remained fixed upon the education of girls as housewives and mothers.

FIGHT BRAVELY – DIE LAUGHING

By the beginning of 1939, about 7.3 million or 82 percent of young Germany belonged to the HJ. It was the largest youth organisation in the world. On 25 March, membership was made compulsory for all children. Any remaining holdouts were conscripted into the organisation amid warnings to parents that their children would be taken from them and placed in orphanages unless they enrolled. As a result, membership had risen to 8.8 million by the outbreak of war .

German youth was now mobilised and ready to wage war to realise the Führer's insane ambition.

HJ Schools

Securing the nazi dynasty

REICH LABOUR leader Robert Ley planned to revolutionise the Nazi school system, and to educate the cream of German youth to administer the Greater Reich. To that end, 12 'Adolf Hitler Schule' (AHS) were established, though they were administered by the Reich Youth Leadership. Baldur von Schirach jumped on the bandwagon, announcing that he, too intended to revolutionise the German school system. Bitter internal rivalry being endemic in the Nazi state, he also sought to compete with the Party-run National Educational Political Institutes, or NAPOLAs, in seizing the best candidates.

The teachers planned to introduce a radical new curriculum, but only their educational and vocational curriculae had been published by 1944. Typically there was an over-emphasis on athletics and developing leadership skills.

Selection depended upon the whim of the local *Gau* leaders. The candidate had to prove that he was one of "the best".

After five years' study the pupil could be awarded an *Abschlussbeurteilung* allowing them to enter University.

Beyond the AHS were the three *Ordensburgen*, or Order Castles, set up to provide training for *Ordensjunker* (Order Nobles). Graduates were to provide the next generation of functionaries for the NSDAP and party organisations.

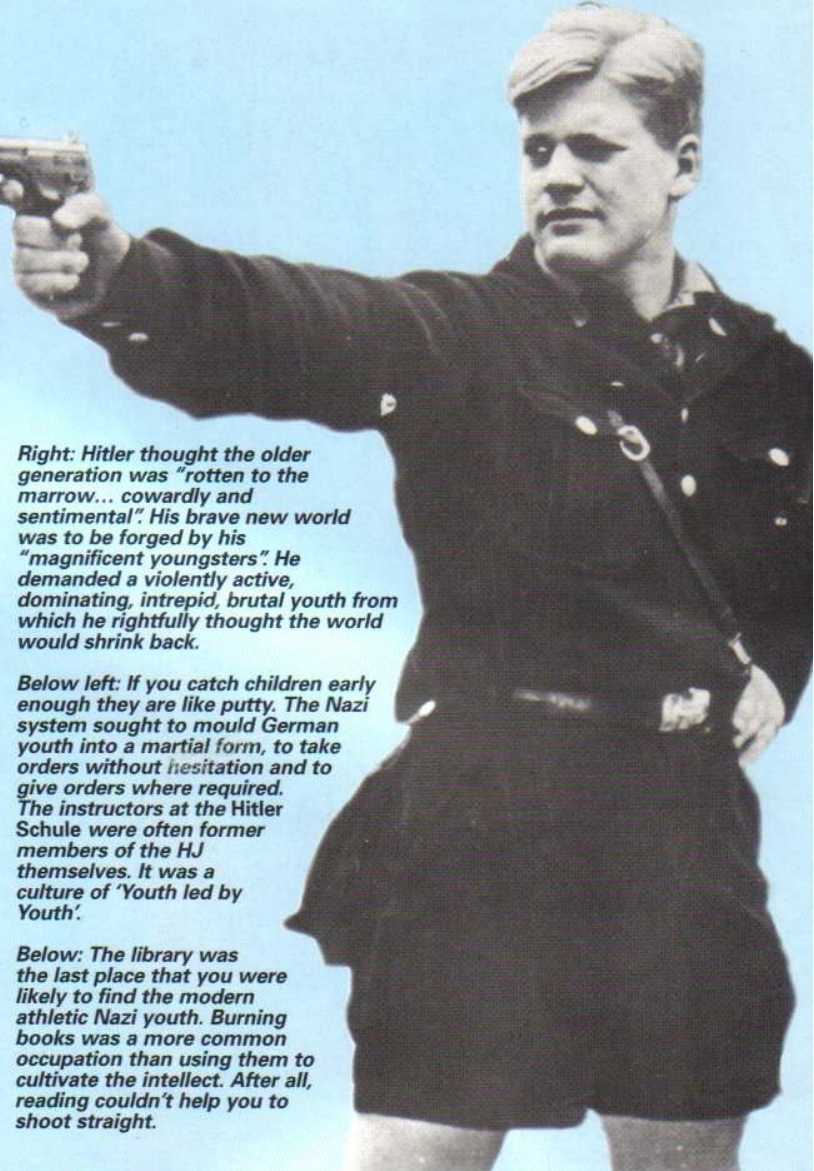
Typically, students received a well-rounded physical education, though their intellectual development may have left something to be desired. But those selected for the course received many privileges, intended to foster an elite spirit.

Only one two-year course between 1937 and 1939 was actually completed.

Right: Hitler thought the older generation was "rotten to the marrow... cowardly and sentimental". His brave new world was to be forged by his "magnificent youngsters". He demanded a violently active, dominating, intrepid, brutal youth from which he rightfully thought the world would shrink back.

Below left: If you catch children early enough they are like putty. The Nazi system sought to mould German youth into a martial form, to take orders without hesitation and to give orders where required. The instructors at the Hitler Schule were often former members of the HJ themselves. It was a culture of 'Youth led by Youth'.

Below: The library was the last place that you were likely to find the modern athletic Nazi youth. Burning books was a more common occupation than using them to cultivate the intellect. After all, reading couldn't help you to shoot straight.





HELL'S FURY

Massacre at Lidice



Prague, June 1942. The hated Reinhard Heydrich lies fatally wounded. Hitler declares that the Czech nation must be held to account and orders that the village of Lidice be obliterated from history.

Above: All 172 men and boys of the village were taken to Horak's farm. They were then taken out in groups of ten and executed by a squad of two officers and twenty men. The killing went on from dawn until four in the afternoon. Later, on 10 June, 11 more miners returning from the late shift were killed, as were 15 Czechs already in custody.

TWO O'CLOCK in the morning, 10 June 1942. German soldiers bang on the doors with rifle butts and order everyone to assemble in the square. Within an hour, the women and children under 16 are herded into the schoolhouse. Older boys and all the men are taken to the farm of the Horak family. At 6 am the women and children are ordered into lorries which take them from their village, Lidice, to the nearby town of Kladno.

At Lidice, some SD men loot the houses while others pile mattresses against the barn wall to reduce the threat from ricochets. The male prisoners are brought out in groups of 10 and shot. The 73-year-old village priest is tortured in his desecrated church before he is murdered. The Gestapo records the execution of 199 males.

The bodies are interred in a mass grave by 30 Jews brought over from Theresienstadt concentration camp. Another group of Jewish slave labourers

come to cart away the rubble: every building in Lidice is torn down and the site of the village grassed over.

VENGEANCE

Hitler ordered the massacre at Lidice to avenge the most spectacular act of resistance to the Nazis yet seen in occupied Europe. Czech resistance fighters had attacked Reinhard Heydrich, 'Acting Reich Protector of Bohemia and Moravia'. Appointed in September 1941, Himmler's sinister protégé paid

scant regard to his own security, travelling through his new fiefdom in a chauffeur-driven Mercedes convertible.

He followed a routine which had been noted by the resistance. Driving between his country estate at Panenske Brezany to his headquarters in Prague, his car had to slow to negotiate a sharp bend. There, at 10.30 am on the sunny morning of 27 May, two Czech Warrant Officers, Jan Kubis and Joseph Gabcik, waited, armed with a bomb and a Sten gun respectively. Heydrich was



typically prompt, approaching the corner at precisely 10.32 a.m.

He watched in horror as a man on the sidewalk levelled a sub-machine-gun at him. But it jammed. Had Heydrich ordered his driver to stamp on the gas, he would have escaped, but the *SS-Obergruppenführer* was both a fighter pilot and an Olympic class swordsman.

Good men do not have a monopoly on courage. Heydrich ordered his driver to stop, and drew his pistol. Gabčík threw his bomb, but it fell short as the car slewed to a halt, blowing out the windows of a passing tram. The Czechs fled for their lives as Heydrich opened fire. He fired several rounds then ran after them.

Suddenly, he staggered and fell. His back was riddled with splinters, the force of the

explosion driving torn upholstery and scraps of his own uniform deep into the wounds.

Heydrich contracted blood poisoning. German medicine had no penicillin and there was no hope of survival. He died on 4 June.

HEYDRICH APPOINTED

Heydrich had been appointed after Reich Protector Constantin von Neurath had failed to stamp out the Communist resistance, active since the invasion of Russia, or the less visible 'home army', loyal to the government of Edvard Beněš, which had taken refuge in London. Neurath was sent home 'on leave', although he did not relinquish the post until 1943. Heydrich took charge.

The Czech armaments industry was a vital addition

to the German war economy, but poor productivity and even acts of sabotage were reducing output. Contrary to expectation, Heydrich did not institute a reign of terror, but eroded support for the resistance by a classic 'stick and carrot' policy. He met with workers' committees and announced an increase in rations for armaments factory workers. Productivity incentives were matched by ruthless punishment for anti-Nazi activity, but the message that co-operation paid was driven home.

The Beněš government feared that if it simply sat out the war in England, it would be sidelined when the fighting was over. In the spring of 1942 it was far from clear how or when the war would end, but Beněš could not allow the Communists to offer the only opposition to the Germans. Nor

Above: 'The man with the iron heart' poses with Karl-Hermann Frank on 27 September 1941 – the day the Reich Protector arrived in Prague to begin his 'benevolent' dictatorship.

could his government ignore the danger of an enlightened Nazi administration: if the Czechs were seen to collaborate with the German regime, the Allies would regard them in the same light as Vichy France or Quisling's regime in Norway. Paradoxically, if Heydrich had behaved like the other Nazi satraps in Eastern Europe, brutalising people that were well disposed to Germany, he might have survived the war.

DESPERATE MEASURES

The Czech government in exile took the brutal – some have said cynical – decision to assassinate Heydrich. The object was not so much the elimination of an evil



Above: Heydrich's Mercedes pictured shortly after the attempt on his life on 27 May 1942. Splinters of the car's coach work entered his spine. The blood poisoning was to kill him eight days later.

Below left: The insurgents after their betrayal are surrounded in the church of Saint Cyril and Methodius in Prague. The Gestapo and Waffen SS begin pumping water into the crypt to force out survivors.



Above right: The body of Jozef Gabčík, one of the assassination team, is displayed. Rather than be taken and tortured by the Germans the resistance fighters committed suicide in the church.

Below: The 29 first-graders of the Lidice school, photographed days before the security forces entered the village. Most of them were gassed at Gneisenau and of those depicted only three survived the war.



monster, but to trigger German retaliation. They calculated, correctly, that the Nazis would react with terrible brutality. The atrocities would poison relations between the occupiers and the occupied. Resistance would increase and, after the war, the 'home army' would be able to present to the world a record of guerrilla action – and suffering – that would entitle it to a full say in the post-war arrangement of Eastern Europe.

Resistance fighters inside Czechoslovakia were appalled at Beněš' orders. They protested, arguing that German vengeance would be horrific. Such an operation would be counter-productive in any case: German security measures would re-double and the resistance would be smashed. Nevertheless, two teams of Czech soldiers, armed, trained and equipped by the British SOE (Special Operations Executive) were landed in Czechoslovakia by parachute on 28 and 29 December. There, they set up communications with London via a powerful radio transmitter, and began to plan the killing of Heydrich.

GESTAPO MÜLLER

The worst fears of the local resistance were soon realised. Heinrich Müller, the head of the Gestapo, was sent to Prague the very day of the attack. His orders were to find the attackers. Some 13,000 Czechs were arrested and, as the SD reported, many people fell over themselves to protest their loyalty to the Nazis. In Pilsen, the use of the Hitler salute became commonplace overnight. Yet no-one claimed the 10 million crown (£125,000) reward for betraying the assassins.

On the same day, Himmler ordered the execution of several hundred Czech prisoners already in his hands – languishing in concentration camps since 1938. Eventually some 3,000 concentration camp prisoners were killed as part of the revenge for Heydrich's death. About 500 of the newly arrested Czechs were executed or died under

torture.

There was no connection between the resistance fighters and the village of Lidice. The Germans claimed to have found machine-guns hidden there, but nothing had turned up during a search on 4 June. Hitler demanded retribution, so Müller, Himmler and the local SD arranged it.

FRIUTLESS ENQUIRIES

No-one came forward, not even after the massacre at Lidice. But the security cordon around Prague was so tight that the resistance men could not escape. Then one of the Gestapo officers suggested an amnesty: if anyone came forward during a five-day period, their own role would be overlooked. Karel Curda, one of the team parachuted in from England turned traitor. The family in one of the safe houses was arrested and tortured, confessing that the assassins had taken refuge in Karel Boromejský church.

The resistance men put up a desperate fight: a handful of men against seven hundred SD and SS. The Germans eventually pumped water into the crypt. The resistance men still on their feet committed suicide with their last bullets. Bishop Gorazd and the officials of the church were arrested and executed later. The bullet holes have never been filled, and the church remains a shrine to the memory of the resistance.

Miloslava Kalibova was one of the older girls deported from Lidice. She recalled how, a few days after the massacre, the Germans separated the young children from their distraught mothers. Ninety-nine children were taken to Prague, while their mothers and the other women were shipped to Ravensbrück concentration camp. Miloslava Kalibova spent the next three years in the camp factory – she made gloves for German soldiers out of the coats of Jewish women murdered in the Holocaust. Her aunt, imprisoned with her, was executed early in 1945 when the

REPRISAL

IN ITS GOVERNMENT of the occupied territories the nazi state had set itself against the rule of international law. Reprisals are often undertaken by military or para-military organisations in the heat of the moment, but Hitler's brutally repressive regime established a culture of reprisal in the occupied territories. It was state sponsored terrorism.

Innocent civilians or captive partisans were taken hostage and without due process of law, executed in retaliation for outrages against German soldiers. This was a counter-productive policy as it strengthened resistance against the state when a more benevolent administration

could have bound the newly conquered territories at a time of pragmatic allegiance.

Heydrich's own government in the so-called Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia was one of enlightened despotism, and succeeded in undermining the resistance movement there.

This was much to the alarm of the government in exile under Dr Eduard Benes. When he sent commandos to assassinate Heydrich he knew that a terror would be unleashed upon the Czech people, which he hoped would both stiffen resistance against the nazis, and provide a platform for him to return as the liberator of his country at the appropriate time.

Above right: The SS continued their retribution through June and July 1942, executing some 1000 resistance members and innocents at Luby near Klatovy. Nazi retaliatory acts were committed irrespective of the culpability of those executed. One hundred and fifty two Berlin Jews were executed on the day of Heydrich's death, and 3000 Jews were later deported from Theresienstadt to the death camps.

Right: Greek Orthodox Bishop Gorazd (left) and minister Ciki say mass in the Church of Saint Cyril and Methodius in April 1942. Both of the clerics, together with two other representatives of the church, were executed in September 1942 for sheltering the parachutists.

commandant ordered daily shootings of the old and infirm. Her mother and sister survived.

INNOCENTS MASSACRED

As for the children, the babies appear to have been murdered early on. Some of the younger children were examined by the Nazi 'race scientists', their skulls measured and other 'tests' performed to determine if they were of Aryan ancestry. A number were 'passed' and taken to Germany for adoption by childless Nazi families. Others were transported to the gas chambers at Treblinka. Only 16 of the 99 children of Lidice survived the war to return to the site of their former homes.

Heydrich's deputy in Czechoslovakia, SS-Gruppenführer Karl-Hermann Frank presided over both the Lidice massacre and the wave of arrests that followed the death of his boss. He continued a policy of savage repression until the end of the war, but was caught, tried and publicly hanged in Prague on 22 May 1946.

In 1949 a new village was built next to the former site of Lidice. A memorial garden was completed in 1955. But it is a mining area, and in 1992, the 50th anniversary of the massacre, an international appeal was launched to plant new trees there: catastrophic pollution is the grim industrial legacy of Communist rule.



Left: After the massacre and deportation, the SS burned Lidice, dynamited the foundations, carted away the rubble and turfed over the site. On Hitler's orders, Lidice had ceased to exist.

Above: Karl-Hermann Frank was the man who actually ordered the execution of the male populations of Lidice and Lezaky. He was executed at Pankraz prison in Prague on 22 May 1946.





HITLER'S MILITARY ADVISERS

Keitel and Jodl

Field Marshal Wilhelm Keitel and Colonel General Alfred Jodl were the senior officers at Hitler's headquarters who helped to turn the Führer's conquering dreams into military reality.

BORN 22 September 1882 on his father's 600-acre estate in western Brunswick, Wilhelm Keitel was at the same time one of the most important commanders of World War II and the Führer's powerless office boy. Badly wounded in the right arm during World War I, he held staff appointments until the end of the war. Like his colleague Alfred Jodl, between the wars he served on the *Truppenamt*, the illegal General Staff.

Here he worked hard at the secret expansion plans for the army. In July 1933 he met Hitler and was immediately taken with

the new German leader, though he would not be employed by the Führer for some years. It would become a fatal relationship, but one to which Keitel would show a loyalty that he would keep even after the defeat of Nazi Germany. At Nuremberg in 1945 he would say, "Even today, I am a convinced adherent of Adolf Hitler. This does not exclude my rejecting some items of the Party programme."

In 1935 he was offered the post of chief of the *Wehrmachtamt*, the Armed Forces Offices of the Defence Ministry. He was reluctant to take the post, but his wife pressed him to accept the

promotion. In 1938 Hitler appointed Keitel to head the OKW, *Oberkommando des Wehrmacht* (High Command of the Armed Forces).

HIGH COMMAND

Keitel divided the OKW into four sections, the *Führungstab* or WFA (Armed Forces Operations Staff), the *Abwehr* (Intelligence and Counterespionage Office), the Armed Forces Central Office and the Armed Forces Economic Office. The WFA was soon headed by Jodl.

In June 1940 Keitel headed the German team that concluded the armistice with the French at Compiègne. It was perhaps

understandable therefore that, when on 7 May 1945 he saw French officers amongst the Allied officers at Reims, where he would ratify the German surrender, Keitel was heard to groan "Not the French as well".

Following the defeat of France in 1940 Hitler created 12 new Field Marshals – one of whom was Wilhelm Keitel. He was regarded with considerable contempt by his fellow officers and given various nicknames including 'Yes-Keitel', 'the Nodding Ass' and 'Lakaitel', a play on the word *lakai* – lackey or flunky.

Goering, as head of the Luftwaffe, ignored Keitel.

HITLER'S HENCHMEN



Left: Wilhelm Keitel and Alfred Jodl pose with their supreme commander at his field headquarters in East Prussia. The two men were Hitler's closest military associates – the burly Keitel passed on the Führer's orders, while Jodl acted as his principal planning officer.

Right: Keitel hovers close by as Hitler confers with the commanders of the Wehrmacht's final assault on Warsaw in 1939.

In a personal letter to the OKW chief he wrote:

"Whether these orders are signed 'In the name of the Führer, Keitel, Colonel General' or 'In the name of the Führer, Maier, Feldwebel' is completely irrelevant as far as I am concerned." As Reichsmarschal he would take orders directly from Hitler. Grand Admiral Raeder felt the same way about orders for the Kriegsmarine, but did not express himself so crudely.

In 1941 Keitel threatened to resign in an attempt to persuade Hitler that invading the Soviet Union was a rash military undertaking. Hitler raged at him, saying that a Field Marshal could not resign and that he must remain at his post for as long as Hitler needed him.

FÜHRER'S YES-MAN

When generals commanding troops at risk of encirclement and capture attempted to reason with Hitler and proposed withdrawing, Hitler could rely on Keitel to back him up. Keitel endorsed all Hitler's 'stand and fight' orders that resulted in the destruction of German forces in Africa, Europe and Russia. Hitler had no respect for the senior professionals in his army, on one occasion shouting, "My Field Marshals are great tacticians. By tactics of course they mean retreating," and then adding in the language of the Munich gutter, "My Field Marshal's horizon is the size of a lavatory lid!" Keitel said nothing.

Right: Jodl accompanies Hitler on his daily walk. The date is 26 April 1941, the staff of OKW are finalising German plans for the invasion of the Soviet Union, now less than a month away.





Above: Keitel finally takes centre stage in May 1945, as he heads the German team which signs the ultimate surrender of the Reich at the Red Army's headquarters in Berlin.



Above: Four years earlier, Keitel was at the pinnacle of his trade. Here he confers with Hitler and von Brauchitsch, C-inC of the Wehrmacht. Brauchitsch was soon to be sacked, but Keitel remained loyal to the Führer.

Below: Alfred Jodl poses with Admiral Dönitz, last Führer of the Reich, and with Albert Speer. All three men were to face trial at Nuremberg, but while Speer and Dönitz were sentenced to prison terms, Jodl was hanged.



Colonel General Zeitzler, the Chief of Staff of the army high command, who was also present, requested a private meeting with Hitler and demanded that he should not make such utterances in his presence. A dumbfounded Hitler agreed.

COMMISSAR ORDER

On 6 June 1941 Keitel began the process that would be his death sentence when he signed the *Kommissarbefehl* – Hitler's orders for the execution of captured Soviet Commissars. Other orders that bear his signature are the Commando Order of 1942 which instructed that captured Allied paratroops and commandos were to be handed over to the SD – which meant that they would be interrogated and executed. He expressed no opposition when senior officers were shot or imprisoned for failing to carry out impossible orders.

Keitel was present at the July 1944 Bomb Plot and as Hitler staggered back he held him in his arms with the breathless words, "Führer you're alive". Keitel quickly arrested his own signals officer, General Erich Fellgiebel, whom he suspected of cutting off communications out of the HQ after the bomb exploded. Keitel also ordered the arrest of Colonel General Friedrich Fromm, commanding the Replacement

Army, and Field Marshal von Witzleben. In the subsequent purge of the officers suspected of involvement in the plot he sat on the 'Court of Honour' which sentenced officers to death or public trial.

In 1945 he was brought before the Nuremberg Tribunal and found guilty of participating in a conspiracy, crimes against peace, war crimes and crimes against humanity. He was sentenced to death and hanged on 16 October 1946.

Keitel was aware of the contempt of his brother officers but in his unfinished memoirs written in prison he observed "Why did the generals who have been so ready to term me a complaisant and incompetent yes-man fail to secure my removal? Would that have been too difficult? No, it wouldn't. The truth was that nobody would have been ready to replace me, because each one knew that he would end up just as much a wreck as I."

JODL

For much of the war Keitel worked in tandem with Colonel-General Alfred Jodl. Though junior to the Field Marshal, Jodl was the real planner of Germany's campaigns.

Alfred Jodl was born in 1890 in Würzburg, Bavaria. He joined the Bavarian army and fought as



Oberkommando der Wehrmacht

KKNOWN UNIVERSALLY by its acronym of OKW, the *Oberkommando der Wehrmacht* or High Command of the Armed Forces was established in 1938 to replace the old Ministry of Defence. In spite of its name, it was in reality nothing more than a body tasked with channeling the Führer's directives to the Army, Navy and Air Force.

The first and only head of OKW in its seven years of existence was Wilhelm Keitel. Although an able staff officer with good administrative skills, he was far from the most determined of characters, and rarely opposed his master in any military decision.

OKW ORGANISATION

Keitel organised OKW into four main departments, of which the *Wehrmachtsführungsamt* or Wehrmacht command staff was the most important. Under normal circumstances, the *Ausland/Abwehr*, or foreign military intelligence department should also have been important,

but it was hopelessly compromised by the fact that its leader, Admiral Canaris, was actively opposed to Hitler and the Nazis. The *Wirtschafts und Rüstungsamt* which dealt with logistics, and the *Allgemeine Wehrmachtsangelegenheiten*, or general military affairs office were relatively unimportant.

Alfred Jodl, the head of the *Führungsamt*, was a far more determined and capable man than Keitel, but his loyalty to Hitler meant that in general he could not oppose the Führer's decisions. However, his military expertise was vital to Hitler, even though the two men hardly spoke in the last two years of the war.

OKW was not like the Joint Chiefs of Staff organisation of the Allies. Each of the German services fought fiercely to defend their own powers, and while OKW should in theory have been an overall coordinating body, it was largely ignored. Goering and Raeder considered that it was simply there to pass on the



Above: From the beginning, Hitler needed to subordinate the armed forces to his will, and OKW was the means by which he did it. The commanders of the Armed Forces were always in Hitler's shadow.

Führer's orders to the Luftwaffe and the Kriegsmarine. OKH – *Oberkommando des Heeres*, or Army High Command – was nominally under the authority. However OKW had

no operational control in the most important theatre, on the Eastern front, and the army's generals tended to look on people like Keitel simply as the Führer's errand boys.

an artillery officer in World War I. Like many of the German officers who would play a key role in World War II he was a member of the *Truppenamt* – the cover for the German General Staff which operated in contravention of the Versailles Treaty. He became leader of the National Defence Branch of the Armed Forces Office and in 1938 was given command of an artillery unit.

In August 1939, a month before the outbreak of war, he became chief of the *Oberkommando der Wehrmachtsführungsstab*, the Operations Staff of OKW. In this position Jodl was Hitler's first adviser on strategic and operational problems. Jodl was the planner who brought Hitler his victories in Poland, Scandinavia, the Low Countries, France and the Balkans.

Jodl was a prudent, impassive and cautious man who preferred persuasion to confrontation when dealing with Hitler, but he was not afraid to stand his ground where necessary.

FACT-FINDING MISSION

In September 1942 Hitler dispatched Jodl to Field Marshal Siegmund List, commanding Army Group A. The Führer wanted to know why the German advance in southern Russia was so slow. Hitler had ordered them to capture the Caucasus and the Caspian oil fields – but he had detached the 6th Army eastwards to capture Stalingrad. List's Army Group had tried to follow Hitler's orders, but without 6th Army lacked the resources to do the job.

Jodl discussed the problem with List and returned on 7 September to explain the

situation to Hitler. The Führer's reaction was to rage at Jodl, but to Hitler's surprise the OKW Chief of Staff stood his ground and shouted back. The normally quiet Jodl vehemently defended List and the OKW chief-of-staff General Franz Halder, but could not prevent their sacking.

As a result Jodl wrote out his resignation and requested a posting to a frontline command. Tragically he was persuaded by Keitel to remain at headquarters.

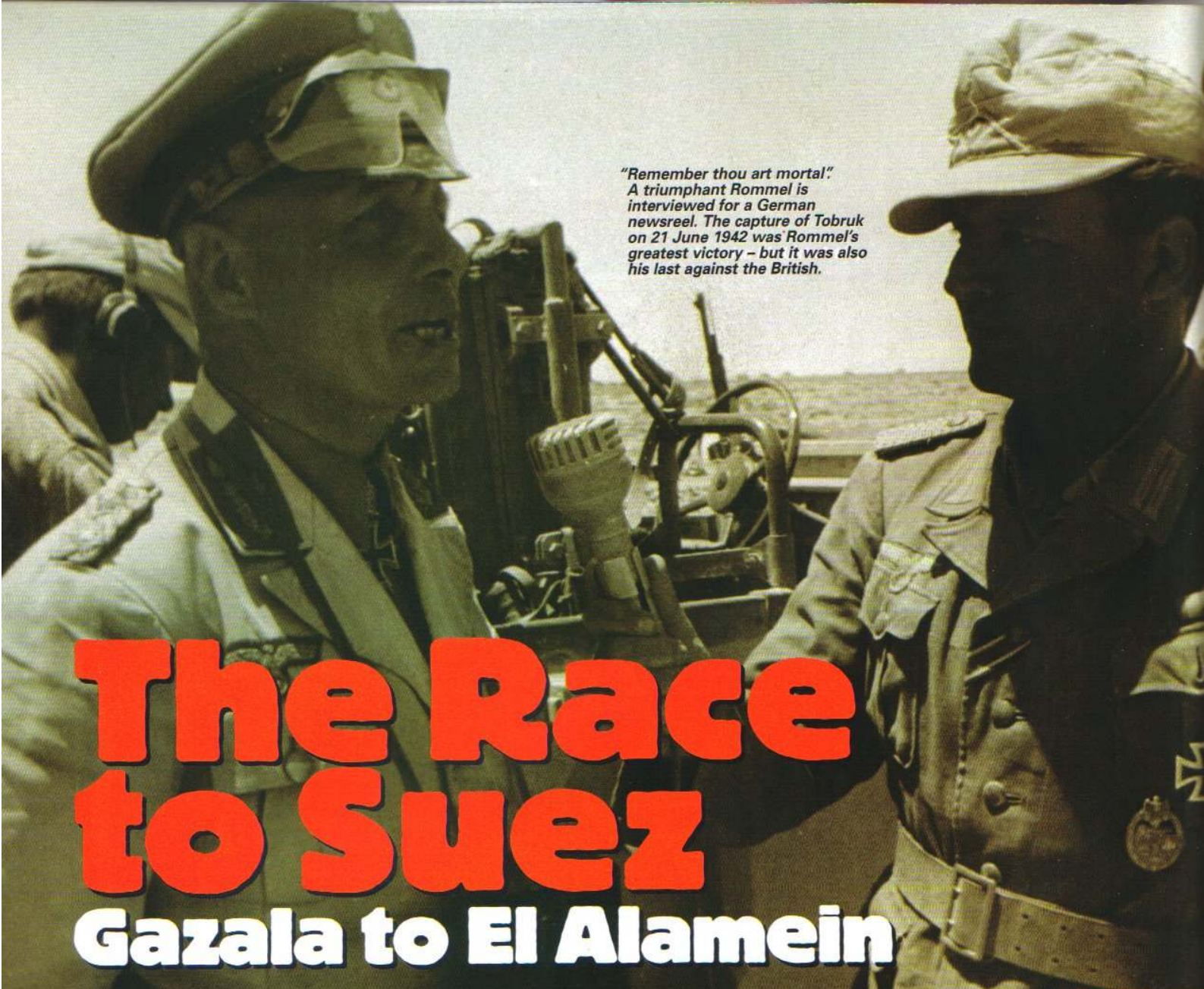
Hitler was shaken by the show of opposition and refused to shake hands with Keitel and Jodl for months after this. He even stopped eating his meals with the HQ staff, preferring to dine alone.

Jodl was standing close to Hitler at the *Wolfsschanze* when the bomb planted by von Stauffenberg exploded on 20 July 1944. He was uninjured.

At the end of the war it was Jodl who, as part of the government of Admiral Dönitz, signed the unconditional surrender at Reims on 7 May 1945. Brought before the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg he defended himself by stating that he was "subject to superior orders".

He was found guilty of conspiracy to commit crimes alleged in other courts, crimes against peace, war crimes and crimes against humanity. He was hanged at Nuremberg on 16 October 1946.

There are suspicions that the Russians demanded the death penalty and the British were prepared to let the General die in return for the court's lenience to Albert Speer. In 1953 a German de-Nazification court exonerated Alfred Jodl posthumously.



*"Remember thou art mortal!"
A triumphant Rommel is
interviewed for a German
newsreel. The capture of Tobruk
on 21 June 1942 was Rommel's
greatest victory – but it was also
his last against the British.*

The Race to Suez

Gazala to El Alamein

In January 1942, against orders, Rommel opened a brilliant campaigning season taking him agonisingly close to the ultimate prize of Suez. But he was fated never to see the promised land.

JANUARY 1942 SAW German forces pushed onto the defensive. In Russia, the Red Army had stopped the Germans on the outskirts of Moscow, then launched offensives all along the front, prematurely anticipating total victory. In North Africa, the siege of Tobruk had been lifted by the British 'Operation Crusader', and Rommel was back where he started in March 1941. British Commonwealth forces were re-organising, ready to resume the invasion of Libya, confidence boosted by America's entry to the war. Yet their rosy view of the situation was to prove as false as Stalin's.

General Cunningham had been replaced as the British 8th

Army's commander during the last stage of the battle. The fighting was confused, swirling around the desert, a situation in which both sides lost senior officers, headquarters and logistic units in unexpected encounters. It tested the nerves of all commanders, but Rommel held his nerve longer than Cunningham. The British theatre commander, General Sir Claude Auchinleck – the inscrutable 'Auk' – replaced him with one of his own staff officers, Major-General Neil Ritchie. But responsibility was blurred. Ritchie, not the most assertive of generals, was cursed with some very independent-minded, some might say, insubordinate divisional commanders. The Auk showered him with a daily

stream of signals and written memoranda and his occasionally uncanny appreciations, the fruit of ULTRA intelligence, lent even greater weight to his authority.

GERMAN INTELLIGENCE

Rommel enjoyed good intelligence too. The Italians had broken the US diplomatic code and both Axis armies had been reading the voluminous and rather pessimistic reports of Colonel Bonner F Fellers, US military attaché in Cairo since summer 1941. As the representative of a once friendly neutral, now allied nation, he received comprehensive briefings from the British, which he passed back to the US war department. In January 1942 Rommel knew he had a window of opportunity to counter-attack.



The summer of 1942 was a happy time for the Luftwaffe and Afrika Korps units. A year later the smiles for the propaganda ministry would be more forced.



The British were preparing their own offensive, but judged the Axis forces too weakened by their recent defeat and withdrawal to be capable of immediate action.

In contrast to the divided counsels of the British Eighth Army, Rommel was very much his own man. Theoretically subordinate to OKH south-west and the Italian high command, he would ignore his German superiors, and his Italian superiors only learned of his plans once their own formations were discovered to be on the move.

ARMS AND THE MAN

The veteran British 7th Armoured division had been replaced by the inexperienced 1st Armoured division, itself divided into brigades for training. Both sides

knew the Germans had landed over a hundred new tanks in North Africa, but only the Germans understood how quickly they could get them into action. British tanks tended to require a complete overhaul on arrival; occasional failures like the omission to refill water pumps, emptied prior to shipment, could cause more vehicle losses than enemy action.

On 21 January, the Axis forces caught the British by surprise. Brief resistance collapsed into chaotic retreat until the British established themselves between Gazala and Bir Hacheim. There they dug in on a 70 km front, reorganised and, prodded by impatient memos from Churchill, prepared to attack.

Both sides were engaged in a

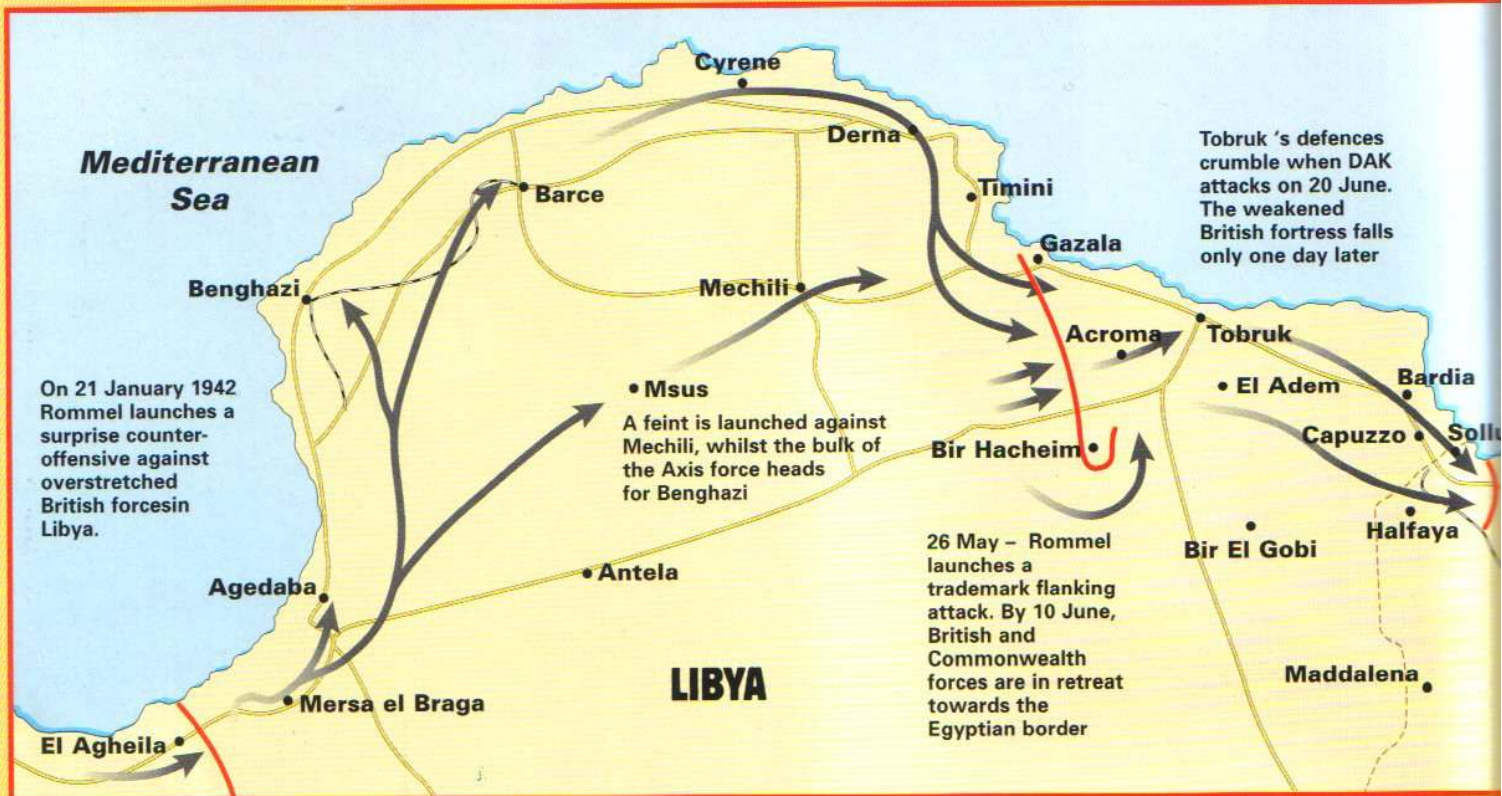
logistic race, to assemble as powerful a force as possible for the next battle. The Germans were hampered by Malta, from which the RAF and Royal Navy inflicted unsustainable losses to the Italian convoys on which Rommel's army depended. German and Italian airborne forces were assembled to take the island and began training for 'Operation Hercules'.

Malta could support no submarines or bomber aircraft under the ferocious aerial bombardment that ensued; Italian merchant ships enjoyed a welcome respite and Rommel's forces were replenished. On the other hand, the first American supplies reached Egypt, including numbers of M3 medium tanks, known to the

British as Lee/Grants (depending on the model). These featured a 37 mm gun in a turret plus a 75 mm gun in a sponson; the vehicle could not fight 'hull down', but it compared well to the thin-skinned cruiser tanks still in widespread service and, being American, did not break down with the depressing regularity of so many British-built tanks.

BRITISH BOXES

By mid-May Rommel's excellent battlefield reconnaissance and SIGINT teams detected signs of an imminent British offensive. He was still outnumbered, but persuaded Kesselring to release squadrons from the proposed Malta operation, including dive bombers and Messerschmitt Bf 109F fighters.



The British defences consisted of a succession of fortified camps or 'boxes', occupied by infantry brigades with supporting artillery. Ensnared behind barbed wire, with some 500,000 landmines surrounding them, they served to break up and channel the enemy attack. Behind these lines the British armoured divisions waited, theoretically concentrated and ready to deliver a knock-out blow, but in reality scattered about the desert with confused command arrangements. Rommel believed the British just did not understand the most basic principles of war. In truth, his opponents grasped the theory: it was a failure of execution owing to the 'command by committee' syndrome still prevalent in the Eighth Army.

DESTINATION TOBRUK

Rommel had visited Hitler in March to obtain permission for a new offensive. His objective was Tobruk. He was to go no further, and was to return the Luftwaffe squadrons to Sicily within a month.

Rommel's own letters reveal greater ambition: he planned, even before the battle of Gazala, to break clean through to Egypt and the Suez canal, converting a hoped-for local success into a major strategic victory.

Rommel attacked on 26 May. Neither his plan nor that of the British survived first contact with the enemy. His feint at the centre of the British line failed to draw the British reserves; his predictable wide flanking manoeuvre was not intercepted by British tank divisions, which sat immobile while their commanders bickered.

General Cruewell, commander of the Afrika Korps, was shot down in his light aircraft and captured. This occurred just as Kesselring was visiting the command post and the Field Marshal (and former gunner) spent an enjoyable afternoon taking charge, as senior officer present, until Rommel arrived.

For a commander often criticised for not paying regard to logistics, Rommel turned the tables on the British by



Above: Hans Joachim Marseille poses beside one of his 158 victims, all but seven of which were claimed in the Western Desert. He operated from Martuba, west of Tobruk and died on 27 September 1942 in an accident.

personally organising a night-time re-supply for 15th Panzer division. His tanks had broken through the British lines, but found themselves surrounded; the British commanders believed they had him trapped. It is one of the classic illustrations that commanders are only beaten when they themselves believe it. Rommel's confidence was supreme, as witnessed by a captured British officer who described Rommel directing this most confused of battles.

Hunched over a map in his command vehicle, headphones on, Rommel issued an endless succession of orders with quiet authority, his confidence, his grip on the battle in such dramatic contrast to the confusion on the other side.

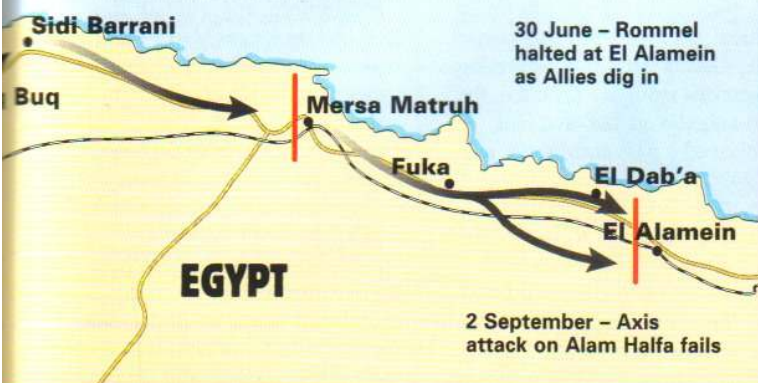
There was no real front-line. Situation maps showed a hideously complex intermingling of forces. Victory went to the man who believed he would win, defeat to commanders who, deep down, believed themselves and



High tide of victory

GERMAN OFFENSIVE JANUARY-JULY 1942

- German attacks
- British Positions



FIELD MARSHAL KESSELRING and the Italian leadership had made cautious plans for the 1942 campaigning season. Rommel had other ideas. He was intoxicated by the Führer's vision of taking the Middle East in a giant pincer movement involving a drive south through the Caucasus and a race across the North African coast. He very nearly took the prize of Suez in a brilliantly executed campaign in the first half of 1942.

The *Deutsche Afrika Korps* and their often unsung Italian comrades executed a series of outflanking manoeuvres. They were brought to a halt by the Allied defensive line at El Alamein, which was flanked by the impassable Quattara depression.

Often outnumbered, Rommel was aided by his opponents: the British were overcommitted in the Far East, and had to withdraw Australian troops from the campaign at crucial moments. They were also handicapped by confused tactical thinking. Command was by committee, in stark contrast to the bullying, aggressive, but above all decisive nature of Rommel's staff meetings.

Rommel's relentless advance in 1942 was further aided by the Axis blockade of Malta, which protected the convoy route to Tripoli. The relief of the blockade marked the beginning of the end for Rommel; his reinforcements began to be destroyed in ever increasing quantities. Hitler was also being hard-pressed in Russia and could not afford to commit further supplies to Rommel until far too late.

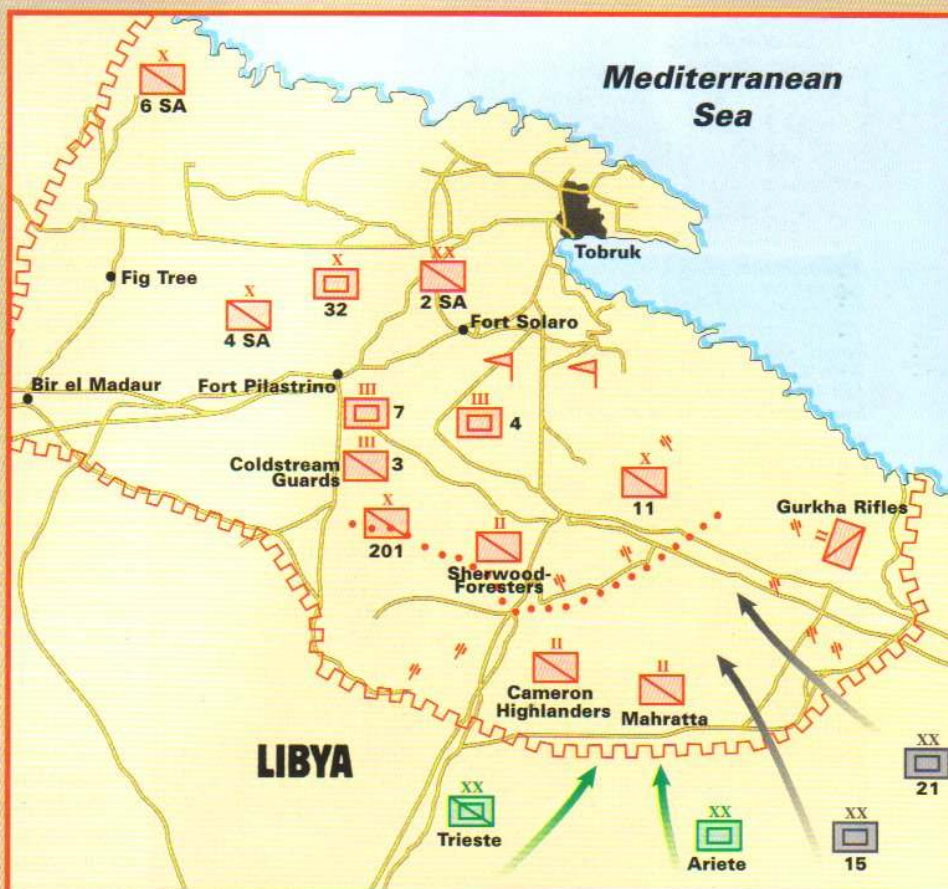
AFTER THE TWO WEEKS of furious fighting south of Gazala the 8th Army withdrew, leaving Tobruk to be besieged. The DAK reached the port's perimeter on 20 June. Although it had a 30,000-strong garrison, Tobruk's defences had been weakened to defend the Gazala line, and armour was in woefully short supply.

The German attack went like clockwork. At 05:20 on 20 June Kesselring's bombers assaulted the south-east corner of the perimeter. Three hours later the 15th Panzer division punched through the British lines and fanned out. The Ariete and Trieste divisions exploited the gaping breach in the defences. The next day, after sporadic resistance Tobruk surrendered.

The spoils were fantastic. Two thousand vehicles, 5,000 tons of supplies and 2,000 tons of fuel were given up. Rommel now calculated that nothing could stand between him and ultimate victory. Nothing, that is, but the British defensive line at El Alamein.

Fall Of Tobruk 20/21 June 1942

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------|
| German attacks | Batteries |
| Italian Attacks | Airfield |
| British Minefields | Division |
| Infantry Unit | Brigade |
| Armoured Unit | Regiment |
| Motorised Unit | Battalion |





Above: June 12 1942 – British armour is annihilated in 'the Cauldron'. Superior German training and tactical awareness overcame an enemy that was slow on the move, rash in the attack and indifferent in gunnery.



Above: In fast-moving armoured warfare awareness of the enemy forces disposition is particularly vital. Here a camera is being loaded onto a Messerschmitt 110 prior to a reconnaissance sortie.

Below: German medical orderlies operate a water purification plant. With water in short supply one German secret weapon was the jerry-can – the ultra practical metal liquid container which never leaked and from which every drop could be poured.



their system inferior. Fighting went in favour of the Germans around the 'Knightsbridge' box, held by the Guards brigade. The southernmost anchor of the line at Bir Hacheim was held by the Free French. It was attacked and taken after more than a week of epic resistance. The British withdrew, their retreat taking on the appearance of a rout as Rommel threw every last man and every precious litre of petrol into the pursuit.

Suddenly, Tobruk was under threat. Its mines lifted to bolster the Gazala defences, its artillery batteries similarly denuded, the so-called 'fortress' that had survived a protracted siege in 1941 fell in 24 hours. Churchill learned of the disaster while visiting President Roosevelt and his dismay was obvious. Roosevelt immediately offered all the assistance his nation could provide: even stripping his own nascent armoured forces of their tanks to help Britain in its hour of need.

RITCHIE SACKED

Auchinleck sacked Ritchie. Taking personal command, he stopped the retreat inside the Egyptian border at a railway station about 100 km west of Alexandria. It was called El Alamein. Identified even before the war as Egypt's crucial defensive line, it was one of the few places with a secure flank. Fifty km miles south of the coast the desert suddenly dips 700 feet into the impassable sand sea known as the Qattara depression.

At this point Kesselring favoured a consolidation of the Axis position and an invasion of Malta – the postponed Operation Hercules. But Rommel had something quite different in mind. Replenished by the large amount of captured supplies from Tobruk he advocated an immediate push on Cairo before the British recovered. Rommel received Hitler's backing.

On 26 June he delivered a none-too-successful right hook on the allied position at Mersa Matruh. But the British,

undefeated, pulled back to the prepared positions at El Alamein and Rommel followed in eager pursuit.

On 1 July Rommel tried to break through with a hasty attack, but was foiled. He re-grouped his exhausted vanguard a week later, but to no avail. Attack and counter-attack followed thick and fast. The British received reinforcements, the RAF made its presence felt; the Americans learned their diplomatic code was compromised, and from 29 June Rommel no longer read Fellers' reports. Auchinleck counter-attacked from 15-17 July and again on 21-22 July, the New Zealand division making excellent progress until assaulted in its turn by 21st Panzer division.

German reinforcements included the Ramcke parachute brigade, formed for the now abandoned attack on Malta. But the British were almost on top of their supply depots, and the RAF gained control of the air, pounding Axis supply columns before and during Rommel's next attack at the end of August. General Nehring was wounded, and von Bismarck, the commander of 21st Panzer was killed. But the British also suffered senior losses. The Eighth Army's designated commander, General 'Strafer' Gott was shot down and killed; General Bernard Law Montgomery was rushed out from England as a replacement.

The change in British fortunes from September 1942 has often been ascribed to the arrival of the ever controversial 'Monty', not least by Montgomery himself. Rommel thought he detected a change in the Eighth Army during August, while the Auk was at the helm, but the record of the unfortunate Gott suggests another disaster might have been on the cards had not Montgomery found himself in charge.

THE LAST ATTACK

The battle of Alam Halfa (30 August-2 September) decided the desert war. By mid-August, Rommel knew that he no choice but to make a fast, desperate bid

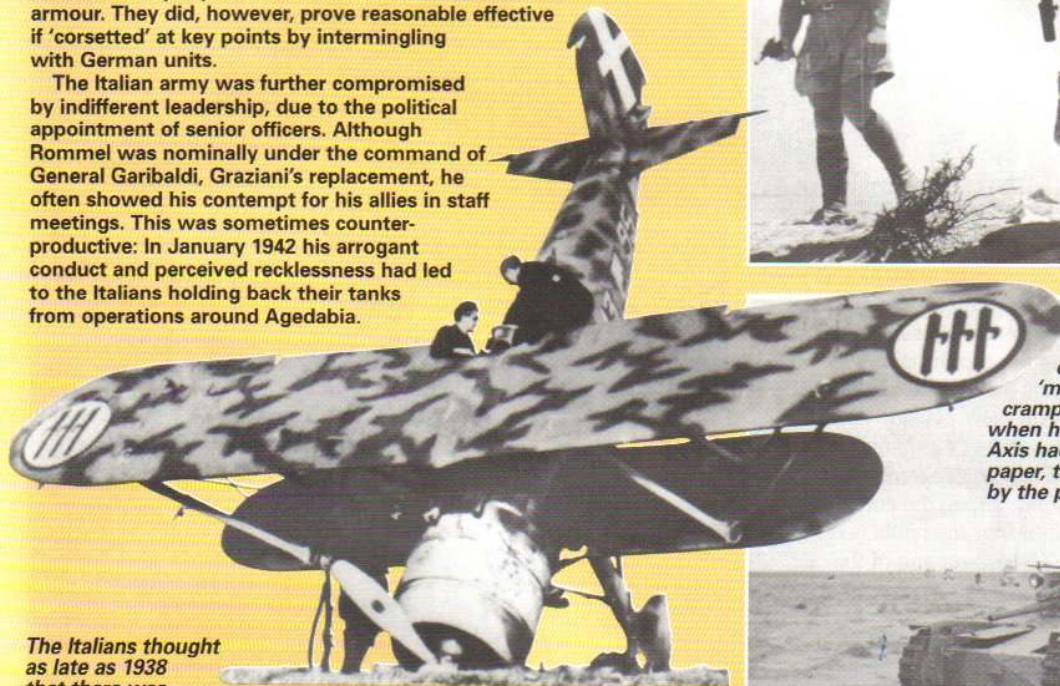


Italian Handicap

IT WAS GERMANY'S misfortune to be allied to Italy, a country which could neither produce nor deploy the new technologies demanded of modern warfare. Italy fought the entire war with the three mechanised divisions that she possessed in 1939. They were equipped with tanks that were obsolete and under-armed. Two of these divisions were destroyed at El Alamein. The remaining armoured division – the Ariete, was an outfit of some quality and was used most effectively at the Gazala breakthrough. It would later claim that it was the one Italian unit to never to have let Rommel down.

The rest of the forces were of varying levels of mediocrity and could be counted upon to fold like a house of cards. Italian units had dash and élan, but no endurance. Importantly, in the mobile warfare for which Rommel was so suited, the infantry divisions were not mechanised and so could rarely exploit the successes of the German armour. They did, however, prove reasonable effective if 'corsetted' at key points by intermingling with German units.

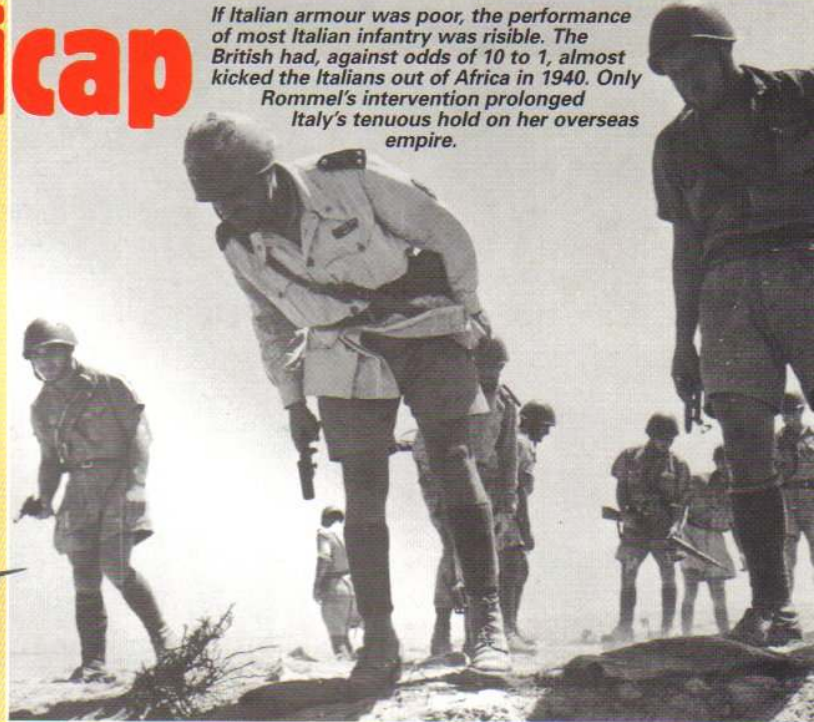
The Italian army was further compromised by indifferent leadership, due to the political appointment of senior officers. Although Rommel was nominally under the command of General Garibaldi, Graziani's replacement, he often showed his contempt for his allies in staff meetings. This was sometimes counter-productive: In January 1942 his arrogant conduct and perceived recklessness had led to the Italians holding back their tanks from operations around Agedabia.



The Italians thought as late as 1938 that there was

still a future for the highly manoeuvrable biplane fighter in modern aerial combat. They were wrong. After initial success in a ground attack role, the Fiat Cr 42 suffered appalling losses in the Western Desert. The aircraft has the distinction of being the last biplane fighter to serve in numbers in the front line with any major airforce of WW2.

If Italian armour was poor, the performance of most Italian infantry was risible. The British had, against odds of 10 to 1, almost kicked the Italians out of Africa in 1940. Only Rommel's intervention prolonged Italy's tenuous hold on her overseas empire.



The Fiat M13/40 was widely employed by the Italian armoured corps in the desert campaign. Bolefully dubbed the 'mobile coffin' by its crews, it was cramped, unreliable and caught fire easily when hit by anti-tank rounds. Although the Axis had considerable armoured strength on paper, that strength was in reality undermined by the presence of such obsolete models.



to break through the Allied line in front of him and reach Suez. Otherwise sickness, exhaustion and shortage of supplies would so weaken his army that the enemy would have no problem in simply moving forward and steamrolling over his positions.

On 30 August as darkness fell two hundred panzers – including 26 of the new Mark IV Specials with the long 75-mm gun – and 243 Italian medium tanks moved off. By midnight they were attempting to cross a minefield which the British had sown between Himeimat and Deir

el Munassib. There seemed to be more mines than they had been told to expect, and their problems were magnified by continual bombing from flights of Wellingtons. They were also engaged by British anti-tank guns firing from just in front. Despite what Rommel had said, it seemed that surprise was not on the side of the *Panzerarmee*.

By 8.00 a.m. the next morning, the bulk of the panzers were through the minefields, though divisional commander General Bismarck had been killed and corps commander

General Nehring, had been badly wounded. Since they were now well behind schedule, they had to turn north along the line which led to the centre of the Alam Halfa Ridge, instead of further on towards Hamman. By 1.00 p.m. as they drew near the ridge, the panzers were running low on fuel – there sand had been much softer than was indicated on the captured British map they used, and both tracked and wheeled vehicles had run into trouble. But a welcome sandstorm cloaked them while the tanks were refilled; there was still no sign of

the British armour, which by now should have offered itself for its usual destruction at the hands of the 88-mm Flak guns.

DEATH IN THE DESERT

It never did. The British tanks stayed out of range for the whole of this engagement, moving occasionally into place to act as mobile artillery. They added to the gradually increasing barrage of 25-pounder shells which crashed among the assembled panzers until the crews were blinded and deafened and longing for darkness. After this barrage,



precedent demanded that a decent silence should fall upon the battlefield, the British withdrawing into remote laagers, the Afrika Korps refilling their fuel tanks yet again and replenishing their ammunition racks.

But someone was making new rules. All that night the British artillery poured their shells into the area in which the panzers were now penned, while the RAF carried out a long session of pattern bombing which caught the supply and petrol echelons as they tried to come up.

When the morning of 1 September came, lack of fuel limited Rommel's forces to only one more attack, on the western end of Alam Halfa Ridge, and this was beaten back by the same implacable gunfire as before. That night the pattern was repeated, and the following day Rommel noticed yet another portent of the times ahead: amid the formations of aircraft which harassed and bombed his unfortunate formations were now appearing Mitchells and Liberators bearing the white star of the USAAF.

The incessant bombardment of Axis armour trapped below the Alam Halfa Ridge continued for another two days and nights

during which neither the panzers nor the guns gave each other much rest. During the night of 3/4 September, the Axis infantry filling the gap through which the panzers had passed had also to fight off New Zealand and British infantry attempts to close it. The gap remained open, however, and in the course of 5 September the remains of 15th and 21st Panzer and of the Ariete, Trieste and Littorio divisions withdrew through it, leaving behind many prisoners and the wreckage of a large number of Axis tanks.

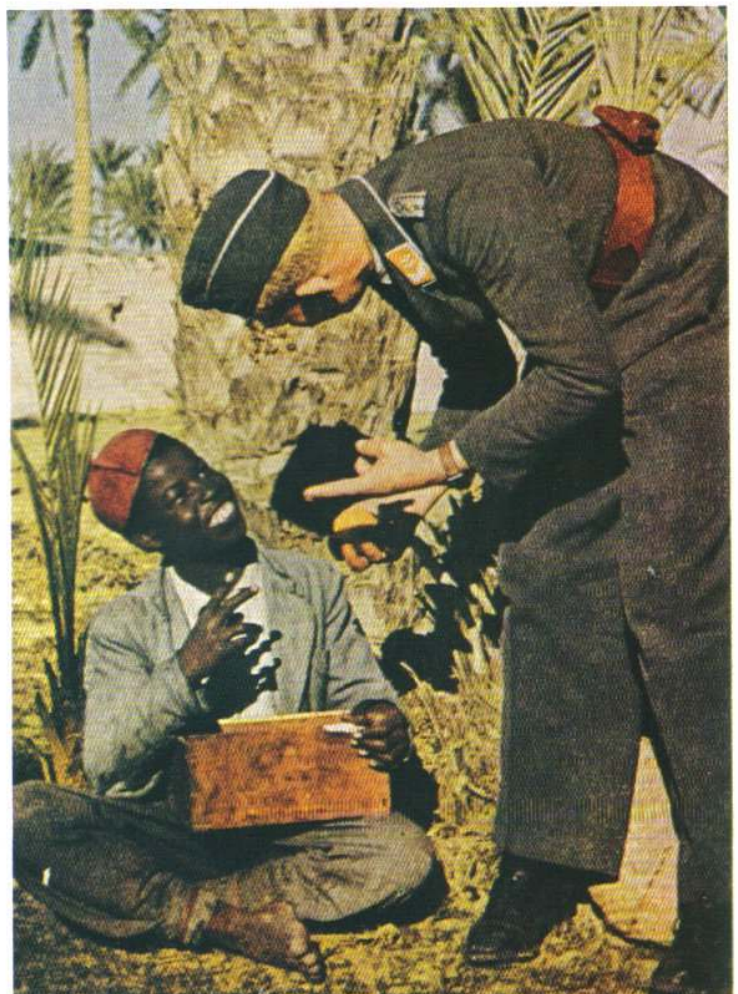
ROMMEL RETIRES SICK

Rommel applied for leave. His attempt to fulfil 'Plan Orient', the grand pincer movement combining his invasion of Egypt and the German attack through the Caucasus, was postponed. Feted in Berlin, where he stayed with the Goebbels family, he disconcerted his replacement General Stumme with the statement that he would return if the British attacked.

And attack they would, even if they were taking their time about it. As Rommel confided to his staff, 'if I were Montgomery, we wouldn't still be here.' But Montgomery was about to make his move.

Above: Panzer IVs move forward towards the line at El Alamein. Between May and July 1942 German armour carried all before them. But in the process, their numbers and supplies were fatally depleted by the wear and tear of continuous battle.

Below: Even though the Afrika Korps was more civilised than German occupying troops elsewhere, for the North Africans the war was a great hardship. But no matter what the uniform, the same needs for luxuries and basic supplies alike offered unparalleled opportunities for trade.





GERMAN LOGISTICS CATASTROPHE

THE FIRST ESSENTIAL for any army to be able to stand the strain of battle is an adequate stock of weapons, petrol and ammunition. In fact, the battle is generally fought and decided by the quartermasters long before the shooting begins.

For all the brilliance of Rommel as an exponent of mobile warfare, his attempts to breakthrough at El Alamein depended upon the ability of his logistics staff to amass sufficient armour and supplies.

Malta was the vital lynch-pin in the arms race, and it became a frontline base in the fight against Axis aviation and shipping. The failure of the Luftwaffe in June to prevent significant numbers of Spitfires from being landed on the island, and the indefinite postponement of Operation Hercules – the planned airborne assault – meant that a revitalised island could once again prevent significant amounts of material from reaching the Axis forces. During the latter half of 1942, the Royal Navy increased the pace of operations against the Italian fleet, and two-thirds of the Italian merchant marine ended up at the bottom of the sea. As a result, the Axis forces in Africa were denied almost half their supplies and two-thirds of their oil.

Another issue was the length of the supply lines themselves. These, for either army, could be safely stretched about 500 km from its main supply base. However, if an army tried to stretch the elastic further, before intermediate bases could be established, then it would snap and the penalty was either a rapid gallop backwards to avoid defeat, or annihilation.

When the Germans reached El Alamein, it took a convoy seven days to complete the round trip from Benghazi – it took two weeks to get to the main port of Tripoli and back. By contrast, British and Commonwealth troops were only 60 km from replenishment.



Above: Rommel's Afrika Korps had always been hampered by numerical inferiority. By the middle of 1942 the numbers did not stack up, and not even Rommel's dash could tip the scales. What few reinforcements that could be spared arrived piecemeal by plane, or risked being sunk to the bottom of the Mediterranean, courtesy of the RAF and Royal Navy.

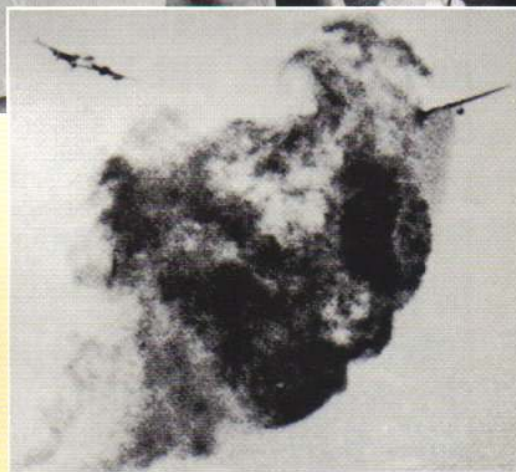


Above: By mid-October 1942 the Allies enjoyed a superiority in tanks of 5 to 1. The British had been unable to come up with reliable armoured models of their own, but now half of their force was composed of American built Grants and Shermans. Only one in six of the Axis tank force was of comparable quality.

Below: Rommel's limited supplies were augmented wherever possible by captured allied booty. Here he enjoys some tinned Empire Selected Fruit on the hoof.



Right: By late 1942 the Luftwaffe in Africa was being outclassed by its opponents, and for the first time lost air superiority. Rommel ruefully observed that "Anyone who has to fight, even with the most modern weapons, against an enemy in complete command of the air, fights like a savage against modern troops."





EARLY PANZERS

Panzers race through the French countryside as the Wehrmacht uses its mobility to outflank and cut off its enemies. The lightweight Panzer II (right) and the Czech-built Panzer 38(T) (left) were not as powerful as their opponents, but it was the way that they were used which led the Germany army to victory.

Early German panzers were well constructed and mobile, but not particularly powerful. Yet they managed to spread the terror of Blitzkrieg all over Europe.

34 HITLER'S THIRD REICH

VICTORY THROUGH superior technology has been a key theme of warfare in the 20th Century. The latest example was the 1991 Gulf War in which a third-world power tried to take on the US Army at armoured warfare – and came second. However, the early days of Hitler's panzers are a salutary reminder that technology alone is no guarantee of victory. In 1940 the best tanks in the world were built and operated by France and the Soviet Union. French tanks were better armoured than their German opponents and carried heavier guns. The Soviets not only fielded better tanks than the

panzer divisions, they had five times as many of them. Yet the French tank force was crushed in a few weeks; only a few hundred of the Red Army's 20,000 tanks survived the initial German onslaught in 1941.

SECRET TANKS

The Versailles Treaty banned Germany from possessing tanks, but a secret training programme was initiated, ironically in Russia. In the late-1920s the *Reichswehr* sent a succession of officers to train with the Red Army, while German engineers kept current with tank designs worldwide. The first post-1918 German tanks were ordered before Hitler came to power.

Design submissions were invited in 1932 and prototypes were delivered in December 1933. In July 1934 the *Panzerkampfwagen (MG) I Ausführung A* entered production, the Nazi regime seeing no need to conceal their defiance of the hated treaty. Hitler formally abrogated the treaty in March 1935, by which time the *panzerwaffe* had ordered the tanks with which it would begin World War II. One type was destined to soldier on until the bitter end in 1945.

In World War I Germany had been on the receiving end of tank assaults that had torn through its frontline defences. The army high command had dismissed tanks as a novelty without a future, so the

HITLER'S WAR MACHINE



"Hitler came to see the our manoeuvres. He was very impressed – 'That's what I need!' he said. 'That's what I want to have!'"

General Guderian describing Hitler's visit to the first Panzer units in 1933

German offensive of 1918 was supported by captured British tanks and only 20 or so A7Vs, the sole German-built tank of World War I. The A7V required 18 crew and was the size and shape of a double-decker bus, with similar standards of cross-country mobility. Most were captured by the British when they toppled over.

The *Reichswehr* had studied the technological and tactical controversies that followed 1918. Turning away from 'land battleships', the first tank it ordered was a small, two-man affair, armed with a pair of machine-guns in a turret. It was no more than a mechanically superior version of the most widely built tank of World War I, the Renault FT-17. The *Reichswehr* intended it for training. Hitler used it to invade Poland and France.

INTERIM ARMOUR

The *Pzkw. I* was not a complicated vehicle to manufacture, but its chosen successors, 20-tonne tanks carrying a 37-mm anti-tank gun or short 75-mm infantry support gun, would take several years to perfect and enter series production. The German army therefore ordered an interim vehicle in 1934, under the designation 'industrial tractor 100'. The first three versions were built in small numbers, fewer than a hundred vehicles combined, but the fourth, known as the *Pzkw. II Ausf. C*, was destined to become one of the standard battle tanks of the

panzer divisions formed in 1935. At that time the German army was planning for a war against Poland, with a possible Franco-German war in the mid-1940s. It never intended to go into battle with such lightly armed combat vehicles.

The Panzer II had a three-man crew and was armed with a 20-mm cannon with co-axial machine-gun. Whereas the Panzer I's machine-guns were fired from 25-round strips, the Panzer II's was belt-fed, better able to deliver sustained fire. Together with the 2,000 or so *Pzkw. Is* constructed by 1939, the Panzer II served to train tank crews and fill out the first panzer divisions. The first three panzer units were established in 1935, the fourth and fifth in 1938.

CARDBOARD CUTOUTS

General Heinz Guderian's first exercises with 'armoured' units had involved pedal-driven 'tanks' that the opposing infantrymen liked to stab with a bayonet when the umpire ruled they were over-run. Now it became a more serious business. Although some combat lessons were learned from Spain, where around 100 Panzer Is and a few Panzer IIs served with the Condor Legion, large scale exercises in Germany revealed more about the strengths and weaknesses of the panzer



Above: Germany's first mass-produced tank, the tiny Panzer I, gave the Wehrmacht experience in operating armoured formations. Although intended as a training tank, more than 1,500 were used operationally in Poland, and 500 were still in front line service during the invasion of France.

Below: The Panzer II, introduced in 1935, was a much more effective fighting machine, although it too was pretty much obsolete by the outbreak of war. However that did not stop the Wehrmacht using it in large numbers in all of its campaigns up to the invasion of Russia in 1941.



Secret Experiments

Reichswehr soldiers prepare to create a 'tank' for exercises in the late 1920s. Forbidden true armoured vehicles by the treaty of Versailles, the German army learned its first lessons in armoured operations by using dummy tanks strapped on to car bodies.



ARMoured VEHICLES were among the many military products forbidden to Germany by the Treaty of Versailles. The Reichswehr knew they were important – after all, German troops had been on the receiving end of the first British tank attacks. To get round the ban, the first German tank designs were called tractors. For testing the Germans had come to an agreement with the Soviet Union, and in the late 1920s a secret tank facility was set up at Kama, near Kazan, about 800 kilometres east of Moscow. Early light tanks showed some promise, but the medium and heavy tank prototypes, usually built of mild steel rather than armour plate, were more problematical. But they did give German vehicle designers valuable experience.

Even before Hitler came to power, the Reichswehr had settled on a family of standard armoured vehicles which it would require to fight the next war. These included the Panzer I training tank, the Panzer II light training and reconnaissance tank, the Panzer III medium tank, and the Panzer IV support tank. To these should have been added the NbFz Panzer V and VI heavy tanks, but they were found to be unnecessary for the new kind of mobile warfare then being evolved.

Below: The Reichswehr ordered the development of new multi-gun medium tanks in 1932. Both Rheinmetall and Krupp submitted designs, designated NbFz V and VI (NbFz standing for Neubaufahrzeug, or newly-built vehicle). Each carried two main guns, a 37-mm and a short 75-mm. In the Krupp turret they were mounted side by side; in the Rheinmetall turret the 37-mm was mounted above the bigger gun. Independent machine-gun turrets completed the armament. They proved costly and impractical, and in tests in 1935 and 1936 showed they offered no advantage over the forthcoming Panzer III and Panzer IV.



Right: The first heavy tanks were ordered in 1925. The Daimler-Benz Grosstraktor had a 75-mm gun and three MGs. It was designed by Ferdinand Porsche. Two mild steel prototypes were built and secretly tested.



Left: The five prototype NbFz tanks saw action in Norway. This is one of the Rheinmetall tanks, being fitted with a Krupp turret in the Krupp factory in 1939. Panzer IIIs are being assembled in the background.

Below: Although smaller and lighter than the experimental tanks, the Panzer III was to prove far more useful on the battlefield.





force. By September 1939 the panzer divisions had rehearsed long marches, refined their logistic organisation and developed the vital combined arms tactics that were to serve them so well. Some tank forces – the British were the worst offenders – fostered an exclusivity inimical to co-operation with other arms. The Germans understood that armour could only achieve its full potential by fighting in harmony with infantry, artillery, anti-tank gun batteries and aircraft.

Three design criteria dominate tank design: firepower, mobility and protection. Some designs balance all three elements, others favour one or two at the expense of the third. Although the German army was to end the war with some of the heaviest tanks in service, fuel-guzzling behemoths with monstrous guns, its main battle tanks in 1939 were relatively nimble, respectably armed and reasonably well-armoured.

BATTLE TANK

Both the Panzer III and IV were kept below 24 tonnes, a weight limit imposed by the army's bridging equipment. Each tank battalion was to consist of three companies of Panzer IIIs, five-man tanks armed with a 37-mm anti-tank gun; a fourth company would have Panzer IVs, slightly larger tanks with a short-barrelled 75-mm howitzer. The Panzer IVs were to provide close support for the infantry, their larger calibre main armament firing a high-explosive shell big enough to destroy an enemy strongpoint. The 37-mm gun of the Panzer IIIs could fire an HE round, but it carried very little explosive and lacked the punch of the 75.

Its primary round was a solid 'bullet', fired at high velocity to penetrate the armour of enemy tanks. Once inside a target vehicle, it would ricochet around inside with the same effect as the metal blades of a food mixer.

War broke out before the panzer divisions could be fitted out with Panzer IIIs and IVs. For

the invasion of Poland, the army's seven panzer and four light divisions mustered just 98 Panzer IIIs and 211 Panzer IVs between them; 1,445 Panzer Is and 1,223 Panzer IIs provided the overwhelming bulk of the German tank fleet. The Polish

army's tank force was minuscule, but Panzer Is and IIs were vulnerable to anti-tank rifles and close-range machine-gun fire could jam their turrets. The real danger came from anti-tank guns or field artillery using direct fire. The 4th Panzer division lost 60

Above: The Panzer IV, armed with a short-barrelled 75-mm gun, was designed to provide fire support for formations of lighter German tanks. In production from the late 1930s, the Panzer IV was able to accept more powerful guns and heavier armour, and remained a potent fighting vehicle right up to the end of the war.





Panzers were designed for European conditions, but during World War II proved capable of handling extreme climates. This Panzer III of Rommel's Afrika Korps is making its way through the scorching heat and pervasive sand of the Libyan desert.

Below: A Panzer III in Russia. German tanks were a little too complex for running in sustained sub-zero temperatures, and it took far more effort for the Wehrmacht to keep them operational than it took the Soviets with their crudely-built but simple machinery.



tanks in one day, trying to break into Warsaw. Nearly 700 German tanks were out of action after a campaign that lasted less than a month. Enemy fire accounted for many, but mechanical breakdowns were unavoidable among the fleet of Panzer Is which were approaching the end of their useful mileage.

CZECH TANKS

The 1st and 3rd Light divisions were largely equipped with Czech, not German tanks. The annexation of Czechoslovakia in 1938 produced a major windfall for the *panzerwaffe*: the Skoda armaments factories, former arsenal of the Hapsburg Empire and now the manufacturer of excellent tanks, field guns and armour-plating for British battleships. Both weighing under 10 tonnes, the Czech tanks were superior in some respects to the German designs. The LT35, known as the *Panzerkampfwagen 35(t)* in German service was a three-man vehicle armed with a 37-mm gun; the LT38 was a slightly larger four-man vehicle, similarly armed but better protected. The latter would remain in production until 1942, by which time its day had passed and German tank production had at last gathered pace.

The 6th, 7th and 8th Panzer

divisions were fitted out with Czech tanks for the invasion of France in May 1940. German factories had provided 349 Panzer IIIs and 278 Panzer IVs, but the majority of the tank companies were still operating the earlier vehicles: there were 955 Panzer IIs and 523 Panzer Is. How would they fare against the French fleet, equipped with an excellent medium tank, the Somua and a core of almost invulnerable heavy tanks?

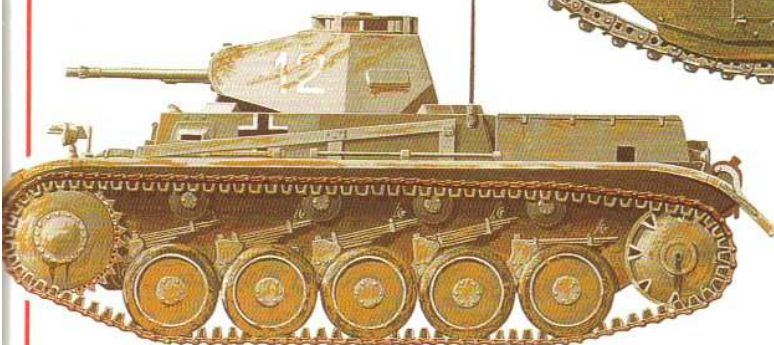
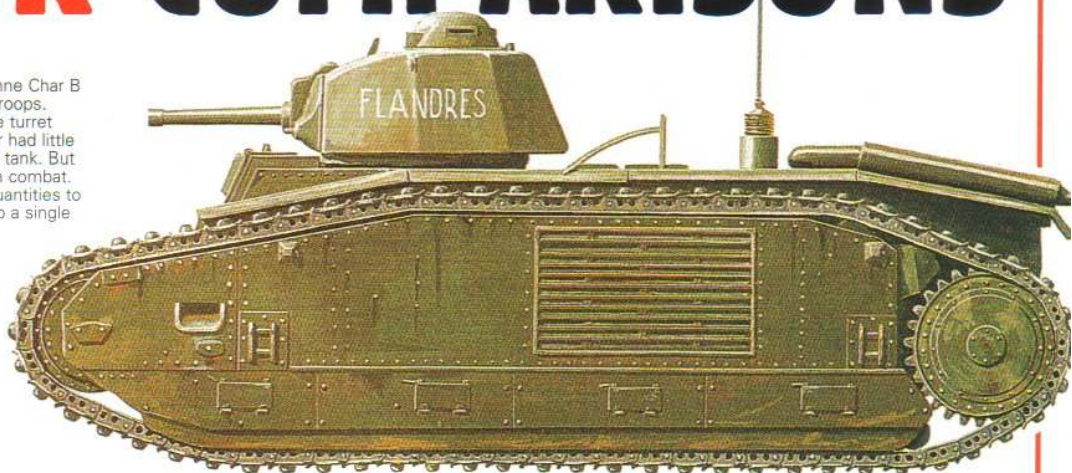
FRENCH OPPONENTS

For a week, the answer seemed to be: badly. The 3rd and 4th Panzer divisions ran into two French mechanised divisions in Belgium on 12-13 May, losing 100 tanks against well-handled Somuas with their powerful 47-mm guns and thick armour. But it did not matter. The majority of the French tank battalions were parcelled out among infantry armies, rather than concentrated in the German manner. Most were in the wrong place. Five German panzer divisions raced down forest tracks to emerge from the 'impassable' Ardennes forest and force their way over the Meuse. The French front collapsed, local counter-attacks were beaten off, and the panzer troops had all-but claimed their biggest scalp to date.

ARMOUR COMPARISONS

Char B1

Right: Derived from World War I tank designs, the 31-tonne Char B was regarded with respect by the Wehrmacht's Panzer troops. Slow and heavily armoured, it carried a 47-mm gun in the turret and a 75-mm gun in the front hull. Even though the latter had little traverse, it was powerful enough to destroy any German tank. But the Char B was a complex beast which was unreliable in combat. The 400 in service in 1940 were used in penny-packet quantities to support local strongpoints rather than being gathered into a single strike force which could have inflicted serious damage on the advancing Panzer divisions.

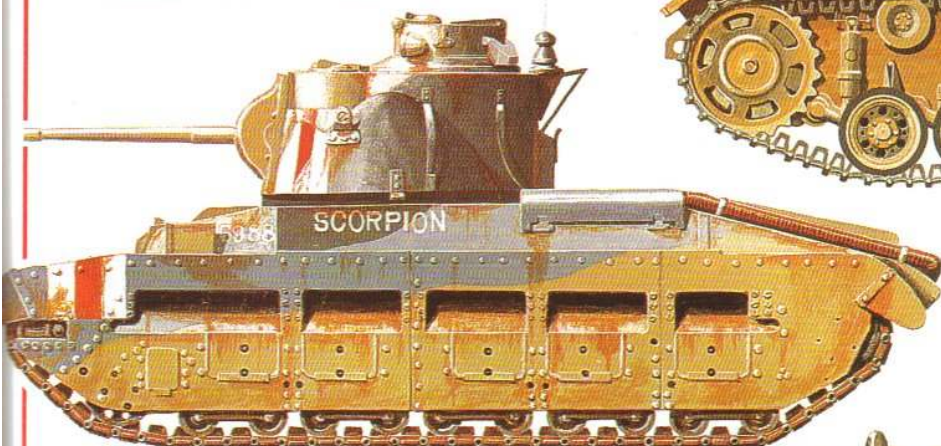
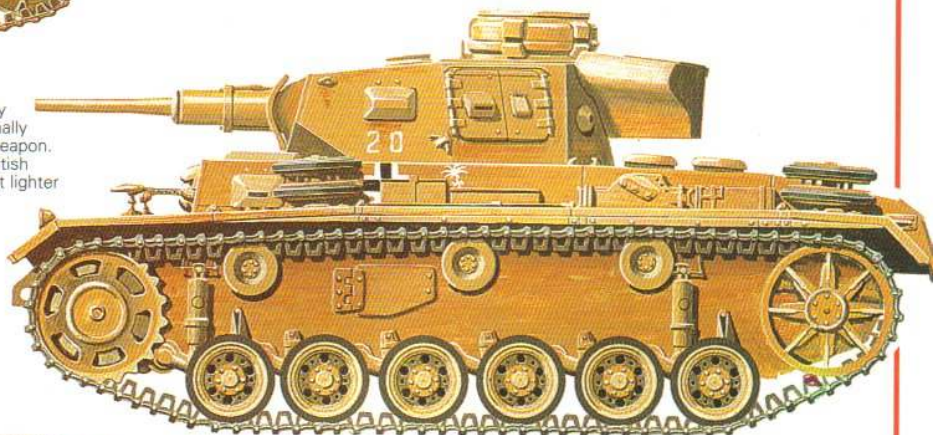


Pzkw II

Left: Although never considered more than an interim tank type awaiting the arrival of the Panzer III and the Panzer IV, the lightweight Panzer II provided the bulk of German armoured strength in both the Polish and the French campaigns. In a stand up fight it was no match for opposition – it carried a 20mm gun and its armour was less than half as thick as on the heavy British and French tanks – but its speed more than compensated for these shortcomings. With a road speed of more than 50 km/h it could outmanoeuvre the lumbering Allied units with ease.

Pzkw III

Right: Intended to equip about 60 percent of the Panzer division planned by pre-war German armoured theorists, the Panzer III medium tank was originally armed with a 37-mm cannon, but was later up-gunned to carry a 50-mm weapon. Not as fast as the Panzer II, it could nevertheless outperform the heavy British infantry tanks, while its heavier gun and armour meant that it could outfight lighter Allied vehicles. Although fewer than 200 had been completed by the outbreak of war, nearly 6,000 Panzer IIIs had been manufactured by the time production of tank variants ceased in 1943.

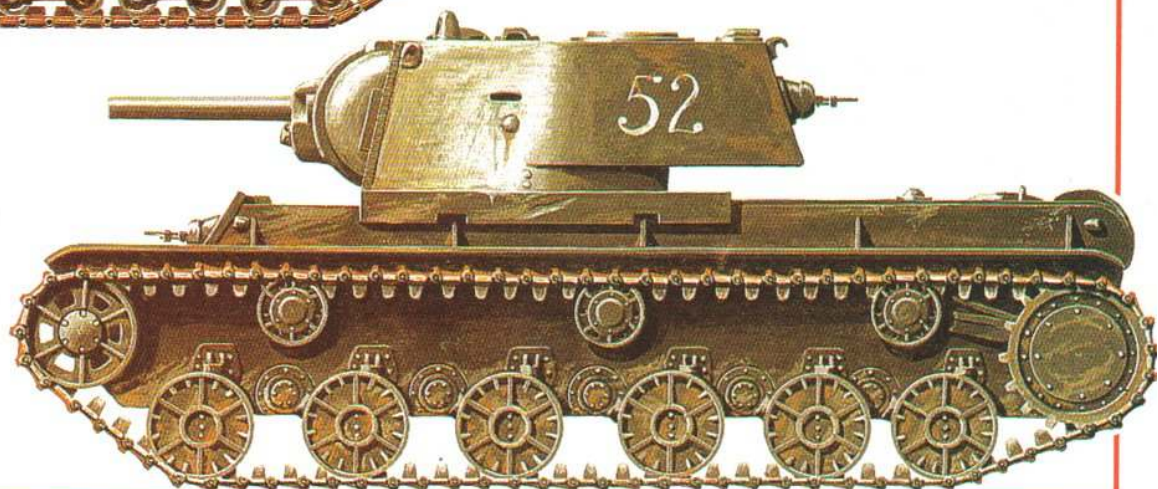


Infantry Tank Mk I Matilda

Left: Although not much larger than the Panzer III, the Matilda had armour up to 78mm in thickness which was all but invulnerable to German tank and anti-tank guns – with the exception of the 88-mm Flak gun. Designed to support infantry on foot, the Matilda was slow compared to the German tanks. It also carried a less than effective 2-pounder (40-mm) gun. In spite of this, it provided the mainstay of British tank forces in 1940 and 1941.

KV-1

Right: The early stages of the German invasion of Russia were a triumph for the Wehrmacht. However, amid the victories there were some ominous signs that the Red Army was far from being as backward as had been thought. In addition to the superb T-34 medium tank, Soviet armoured units were equipped with the powerful Kliment Voroshilov or KV-1 heavy tank. Introduced to service in 1940 and weighing in at more than 43 tonnes, the KV-1 had a 76.2-mm gun and armour up to 100mm thick. It was more than a match for any German tank, though like the French heavy tanks it was not used in large enough concentrations to have any major effect on the early stages of the battle.





ALTHOUGH NOT as well-known today as the SA or the SS, the NSKK or *Nationalsozialistisches Kraftfahrkorps*

(National Socialist Motor Corps) was one of the Nazi party's senior organisations.

Originally a branch of the SA, it was founded in 1930 as the NSAK (Nazi Automobile Corps). The NSAK's primary function was to provide a vehicle pool – mostly private cars – to assist in the increasing demands of party electioneering. It was renamed the NSKK in 1931, and in 1934 became independent of the SA.

The NSKK's functions changed considerably when the Nazis came to power. One aim was to teach motoring skills to the young, and more than 200,000 teenagers were taught to drive between 1933 and 1939. The NSKK also acted as traffic police, and provided a nationwide breakdown assistance service.

The NSKK – or more precisely, the affiliated *Deutscher Automobil-Club* – was also the only official organiser of motor sports in the Third Reich.

WAR ROLE

As war approached, the NSKK was given a more overtly military mission. It was used to provide transport for the massive engineering projects of the Todt organisation, and had responsibility for instructing army reserve drivers. With the outbreak of war, the NSKK provided logistics support to the Wehrmacht and the Luftwaffe, and units occasionally found themselves in combat.

After its first year the NSKK had a membership of under 10,000: at the time of the invasion of Poland it had grown into a formidable body half a million strong.

Above left: Adolf Hitler uses the Blutfahne to 'consecrate' the Feldzeichen or banners of the National Socialist Motor Corps. The NSKK, with their distinctive leather helmets, played a part in all major Nazi ceremonies.

NSKK



Above: The NSKK's distinctive helmet. Worn primarily as part of the 'Grand Parade' uniform, it was based on the crash helmet originally used by pilots of the Imperial German army's flying service during the First World War. The 'First pattern' helmet worn in the early 1930s bore a stylised nickel-silver eagle. The 'Second pattern' helmet, introduced as membership increased dramatically later in the 1930s, had a cheaper, simpler aluminium eagle and swastika, to which had been added the NSKK scroll. The NSKK dagger was a variant of the standard SA weapon.

Right: Traditionally, Nationalsozialistisches Kraftfahrkorps units were named after the regions in which they were raised. However, after the death of Korpsführer Adolf Hühnlein in 1942, Motorgruppe Hochland was given his name as a memorial and wore a dedicated cuff title. The collar patches seen here were those of an NSKK-Gruppenführer or General. The silvered eagle is a wartime example, distinguishable from pre-war versions by its longer wingspan.



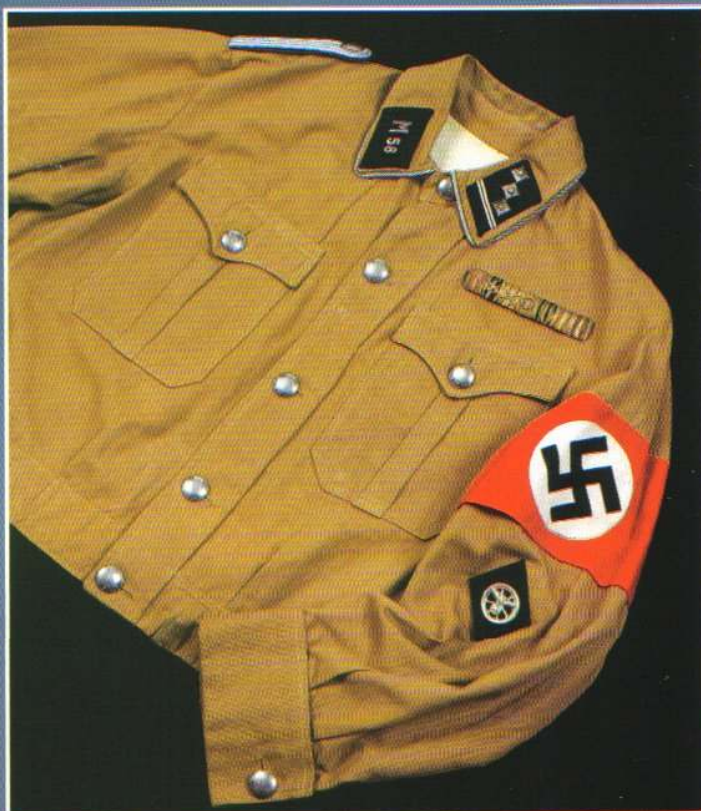
NAZI SYMBOLS



Right: A pre-war NSKK tan uniform shirt. It was worn by an NSKK Obersturmführer (senior lieutenant) on the staff of NSKK Motorstandarte (Motor Regiment) 58. This unit was based at Braunschweig and formed part of the Brigade Niedersachsen – which confusingly had the same brown epaulette piping as the Westmark Brigade. The uniform of tan shirt, black 'Sam Brown' belt, black breeches and jackboots was worn on parade before the war; later members of the NSKK on wartime duties wore army-style uniforms.

Below right: A group of items associated with Adolf Hühnlein, the founder and Korpsführer of the NSKK. The group includes a souvenir postcard, his Korpsführer collar tabs, and a signed letter. Hühnlein, a former army engineer and staff officer served in the Freikorps after the war. He joined the SA in 1923 and took part in the Beer Hall Putsch. Hühnlein became party quartermaster in 1925; in 1927 he was made head of the SA motor troops and in 1931 he became the leader of the NSKK. In 1933 Hühnlein was given added responsibility by Hitler, to whom he reported directly. He was to reform the entire German motor industry and to encourage the use of the car by the German people. During the war he organised Germany's motor transport network.

Below: An NSKK four-pocket service tunic. This example was worn by an NSKK Rottenführer (senior corporal) of the 3rd Battalion, NSKK Motorstandarte 151, based at Mannheim. The colour of the piping on the single epaulette indicated the Brigade to which the regiment belonged, brown in this case indicating Brigade Westmark. The NSKK Eagle was worn on the upper right sleeve. The diamond arm insignia on the lower left sleeve is a first pattern qualified driver's insignia.





MOTORISED NAZIS

THE ORGANISATION of the NSKK, once it had been separated from the SA, reflected the pyramidal structure typical of Nazi groups. At the head was *Der Führer des NSKK*, or *Korpsführer*, answerable only to Adolf Hitler. The leadership office was responsible for NSKK leadership schools, the technical school in Munich and the technical and equipment inspectorate. Beneath the leadership office were four *Motor-Obergruppen* – Nord, Ost, West and Süd. Each of these, commanded by an *Obergruppen-*

führer, controlled a number of *Motor-Gruppen* and *Motor-Brigaden* which in turn were composed of several *Standarte* or regiments. Two independent *Motor-Gruppen*, Ostland and Schlesien, reported direct to the *NSKK Korpsführung*. Each *Motor Standarte* consisted of three or four *Motor-Staffeln* or squadrons, which in turn were made up from up to five *Motor-Stürme*. The organisational structure paralleled that of the SS, and NSKK ranks were similar to those of the black-clad security units.



Above: There was a section of the NS Motor Corps devoted to water transport. Marine NSKK members were identifiable from the gold rather than silver braid used in their insignia. This group shows the sleeve eagle and swastika and the standard sleeve diamond used by motor boat units. The NSKK Marine epaulette is the type worn by junior ranks.

Above left: An NSKK insignia group from the 41st Abteilung, Motorstandarte 81 (usually abbreviated 41/M81 and worn on the right collar tab). The light blue cloth and piping on the triangular forage cap badge and epaulette indicate a unit from Hochland/Bayernwald. The 81st Standarte was based at Regensburg in the Bayernwald.

Below and below left: NSKK forage caps bore both rank insignia and regional identification. The blue triangle indicated Hansa or Hessen, the brown triangle was worn by brigades in Westmark and Niedersachsen, and the orange triangle was carried by Südwest and Mitte brigades. The rank badges indicate (left to right) NSKK Sturmmann, NSKK Scharführer and NSKK Truppführer. The officer's forage cap with the apple-green triangle from Thüringen or Pommern carries the rank insignia of an Oberstürmführer.



A Z

OF THE THIRD REICH

Kraft durch Freude

Also known by the initials KdF, 'Strength through Joy' was the National Socialist recreational organisation. Organised as part of the German Labour Front, the KdF programme was designed to stimulate morale among workers. It was based on the Fascist Italian scheme *Dopo Lavoro* ('After Work'). When the German version was proposed it was going to be called *Nach der Arbeit*, meaning much the same thing. The organisation as it eventually evolved was divided into five departments. 'After Work' arranged concerts and evening classes and was a source of cheap theatre tickets. 'Sports Office' organised participatory sports. 'The Beauty of Work'

concentrated on improving the working environment. The 'Wehrmacht Home office' liaised between the Labour Service and the armed forces. The largest unit was the 'Travel, Hiking and Holiday' office, which by 1938 had arranged holiday trips for more than ten million Germans. It was also the organisation behind the KdF Wagen, which became the Volkswagen or the People's Car. The Volkswagen was the only post-war survivor, and lived on as the familiar VW Beetle.

Right: KdF eventually became a huge leisure organisation, which invented the notion of the cheap package tour using cruise liners and holiday camps.



Kramer, Josef (1906 – 1945)

The SS officer in command of the *Krankenlager* reception camp for sick prisoners at Bergen-Belsen that was liberated by the British in April 1945. Kramer received his training from Rudolf Höss at Auschwitz and later served at Mauthausen, Dachau and Birkenau. At Auschwitz he was responsible for killing the first batch of 80 female inmates with Zyklon-B gas. After stripping the women, he ran them through the gas chamber in small batches.

He reported, "I had no feelings in carrying out these things because I had received an order. That, incidentally, is the way I was trained." He took over Bergen-Belsen late in 1944 and ran a brutal regime of neglect and overcrowding. When the numbers reached 88,000 in April 1945 he stopped having roll calls. At least 30,000 inmates died of disease and starvation as a typhus epidemic swept through the camp in the first

three months of 1945. Tried by a British military court he was hanged in November 1945.

Right: Josef Kramer after his arrest by British soldiers in April 1945. It was through his deliberate neglect of the prisoners in his charge that tens of thousands were to die in less than 12 weeks. Yet he accepted no blame, claiming to have been only obeying orders.

See also Holocaust
Issue 6: Belsen



Kreisauer Kreis

The 'Kreisau Circle' was a small but select opposition group to Hitler and the Nazis. Its name was probably coined by Nazi jurist Roland Freisler, who took it from the location of the von Moltke family estate in Silesia. It numbered scions of some of Prussia's most noble families among its members, including Helmuth James Graf von Moltke and Peter Graf Yorck von Wartenburg. By 1943 it had 20 active members including academics, liberals, conservatives, socialists, Catholics and Protestants. The group advocated a complete reshaping of German and European society along 'Christian socialist' lines, with political power emanating from grass-roots organisations, but with

state control of raw materials and energy. More radically, the Kreisau circle felt that national sovereignty should be renounced, to be replaced by a federally-organised European union. Moltke was also involved with the *Solf-Kreis*, an informal organisation set up by the widow of a German diplomat. This helped numerous refugees to escape Germany, but was infiltrated and broken up by the Gestapo. Moltke was arrested in January 1944, and the Kreisau circle disintegrated. The circle had no connection with the July Plot to assassinate Hitler; in fact Moltke could not conscience the idea of tyrannicide. However, some of the group were involved, and most were arrested and executed.

Right: Helmuth James Graf von Moltke was descended from a long and distinguished line of Prussian aristocrats, a line which included German heroes like the victorious commander of the Prussian army during the Franco-Prussian war. Unlike most of his ancestors, von Moltke was not a soldier: trained in the law, he worked as a legal advisor to the Wehrmacht. Moltke was one of the key movers of the Kreisauer Kreis, but he also had links with other opposition groups, including those in the Abwehr or military intelligence.

See also Secret Hitler Files
Issue 9: Hitler's Vengeance
See also Inside the Third Reich
Issue 20: Opposition to Hitler



Kretschmer, Otto (1912 – 1998)

The son of a teacher, Otto Kretschmer was the top submarine ace of World War II. Born at Heidau in Silesia, he spent eight months in England before joining the Kriegsmarine in 1930. In 1936 he transferred to the U-Boat arm, commanding his first boat in 1937. As a wartime U-Boat captain in U-23 and U-99 he sank 44 ships with a total tonnage of 266,629 tonnes. His motto on operations was "One

torpedo... one ship". Nicknamed 'Silent Otto' he was awarded the Knights Cross with Oak Leaves on 4 November 1940. On 26 December 1941 Swords were added to this decoration. Kretschmer's war came to an end on 17 March 1942. In a running battle with the destroyer HMS Walker his submarine was forced to the surface by depth charges. Kretschmer was captured and with him 40 out

of his crew of 43. After the war Kretschmer entered the West German Bundesmarine where he served with distinction, retiring with the rank of Flotillenadmiral in September 1970.

Right: Otto Kretschmer was ruthless in his approach to combat and sinking ships, but as a consummate professional he always maintained a completely correct attitude to his opponents.



Kriegsschuldlüge

'War Guilt Lie' was a term often used by Nazi speakers to denounce Article 231 of the Treaty of Versailles. Article 231 placed the responsibility for causing all the loss and damage of World War I on Germany. Politicians of all persuasions were against the treaty, but the Nazis were particularly out-

spoken, asserting that the *Kriegsschuldlüge* was intended to do nothing less than destroy the German people. They pointed out that the treaty had deprived Germany of 15 per cent of its arable land, 12 per cent of its livestock, nearly 10 per cent of its manufacturing plants, two-fifths of its coal reserves, almost two-

thirds of its iron ore and more than half of its lead. In addition, all overseas investments and all colonies had been lost, and with them Germany's sources of rubber and oil. And even if Germany still had interests abroad, they could do nothing since the navy had been wiped out and the merchant marine

reduced from 5.7 million tonnes to just 500,000 tonnes.

The Weimar government repeatedly attempted to obtain a revocation of the guilt clause. As the moral justification for the harshness of the treaty's terms rested upon the issue of guilt, their efforts were doomed to failure.

Kroll Opera House

Home of the Reichstag from 1933. The Kroll was the second house of the Berlin State Opera. Otto Klemperer was the musical director when the Nazis came to power, but was forced into exile. The building became a political location when it was used to house the German parliament after the Reichstag was destroyed by fire on 27 February 1933. However, it saw little of real parliamentary democracy: it was here that the Enabling Act was passed in the first Reichstag session after the 5 March elections. By that act Hitler and the Nazis were given dictatorial powers. From then on the

Reichstag was simply a rubber stamp body, approving anything the Führer wanted them to. It was still used for major speeches, however, and it was the scene of many ceremonial events. On 13 July 1940, for instance, Hitler interrupted a long speech after the defeat of France to promote 12 generals to Field Marshal.

Right: Adolf Hitler occupies centre stage in the former Kroll Opera House. It is December 1941, and the Führer has just declared war on the United States. As the temporary home of the Reichstag, it was to see many such declarations, but precious little in the way of parliamentary debate.



Krupp

Germany's largest and most influential steel concern. The Krupp family rose to prominence in the 19th century. Friedrich Krupp founded a cast steel plant in 1811, and under his son Alfred, known as the 'Cannon King', it became world famous. Alfred's son Friedrich Alfred saw the business expand dramatically, partly to meet demand from the rapidly growing German Navy, and partly from royalties on Krupp armour plate being paid by arms manufacturers all over the world. At the turn of the 20th century, Krupp employed more than 40,000 people. Krupp provided a large proportion of Germany's heavy armaments during World War I, but after the

war the company had to move out of the weapons business. It survived the depression making steel, trucks and locomotives, but with the accession of Adolf Hitler to power it went back to making guns. By the outbreak of World War II, Krupp controlled 87 major factories and industrial plants and 110 companies in Germany alone: the firm also had a controlling interest in more than 40 overseas companies. During the war Krupp was the main supplier of heavy weaponry to the Wehrmacht and the Kriegsmarine, using large numbers of slave labourers in its many works and yards. The firm's board was tried at Nuremberg, and the Krupp family was

ordered to sell three quarters of its holdings. But there were no buyers, and the company's fortune had been restored by the 1960s. Today it remains one of Germany's largest conglomerates.

Right: An aerial view of part of the massive Krupp Works at Essen. Krupps became famous for providing the Kaiser and many other armies with steel and guns, but its growth in the 20th Century gave it interests all over Germany and throughout the world.



See also Secret Hitler Files
Issue 7: Hitler's Backers
See also Inside the Third Reich
Issue 11: Rearmament

Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach, Alfried (1907 - 1967)

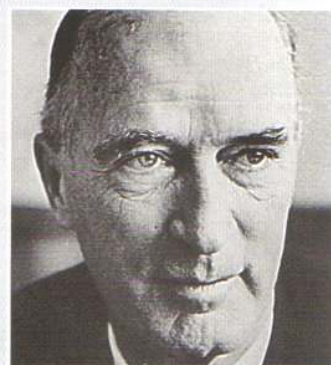
Son and heir of Gustav Krupp, he was an enthusiastic supporter of Hitler's war. Appointed to the board, to all intents and purposes he controlled the Krupp organisation from 1940, officially taking over from his father (who had suffered two strokes) in 1942. Under his direction the Krupp concern moved to new factories in territories occupied by the Germans, and looted industrial plant from the occupied countries and returned it to the Krupp works in Germany. Krupp had no compunction about using

conscripted or slave labour from concentration camps in his factories, and by 1943, when he became sole owner of the company, Krupp was using more than 100,000 involuntary workers. Captured by the Canadians at the end of the war, he was tried both for crimes against humanity and for plundering European industry. Alfried was sentenced to 12 years in prison and his property was forfeited. However, in the changing Cold War political climate he was released from Landsberg in 1951 and his

property and companies (valued in the millions) were restored to him. By the 1960s, he was once again one of the world's most wealthy men.

Right: Alfried Krupp joined the SS in 1931 and was a member of the Nazi Flying Corps. As Konzernherr of the family firm at the height of World War II, it was he who threw the full weight of the Krupp concern behind Hitler and the Nazi war effort.

See also Inside the Third Reich
Issue 11: Rearmament



Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach, Gustav (1870 - 1950)

Gustav von Bohlen und Halbach married Bertha Krupp, heiress to the Krupp fortune, in 1906. Adding the Krupp family name to his own, he became a board member that year, and was appointed chairman in 1909. A neat, almost obsessively ordered man, he served on the Prussian state council from 1921 to 1933. Diplomat, banker and industrialist, Gustav had initially opposed Hitler and the Nazis, but on their accession to power he

became an enthusiast. Hitler lauded his company as a National Socialist model workplace, and appointed him a Military Economy Führer in 1937. Gustav Krupp suffered a severe stroke in 1941, and although nominally in charge of the company, for the next two years he was little more than a figurehead. In 1943 Gustav handed control to his eldest son Alfried, just as the Krupp company was returned from public ownership to the family.

Gustav was senile by the end of the war and so escaped being tried for war crimes at Nuremberg.

Right: Gustav Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach married into the Krupp family in 1906. An almost archetypal authoritarian Prussian, he steered the company through the difficult years after World War I, and after some hesitation became a supporter of Hitler and the Nazis. He was awarded the Gold Party Badge in 1940.



Kursk Salient

The Soviet offensives after Stalingrad drove the German army back until von Manstein's successful counter-offensive at Kharkov in March 1943 brought the Red Army to a halt. The new Soviet front line had a 150-km bulge centred on the town of Kursk, extending deep into German held territory. For several months, Hitler and his generals debated attacking the salient from two sides, but they waited too long. The Red Army, aided by decoded Enigma messages passed on by the British, had time to prepare. When the Wehrmacht launched Operation Citadel in July 1943, they started one of the biggest battles in history. The Germans committed 10,000 artillery pieces, 2,380 tanks, 2,500 aircraft and 900,000 troops to the attack. They were met by 1,337,000 Soviet troops equipped with 20,000 guns, 3,300

tanks, 2,560 aircraft and millions of mines. The Soviet forces held the attack and when they went over to the counter-offensive they began a drive to the west which would only stop when they reached Berlin in May 1945.

Right: Troops and tanks of the SS Totenkopf Division assemble for the start of the Kursk battle. Had the Germans launched the operation in the spring of 1943 when it was originally discussed, they might have had more success. However, continual delays gave the Soviets time to prepare a massive belt of defences and to gather resources for the almost inevitable counter attacks which would be launched after the German attack was held.

See also Hitler's War Machine
Issue 2: PzKpfw VI Tiger
See also Hitler's Battles
Issue 16: Eastern Front 1943



Lachsfang (Salmon Trap)

The code name issued on 21 July 1942 for the planned operation to seize the Murmansk railway in northern Russia in 1942. Hitler favoured an attack launched by Finnish and German troops that

would cut the railway near Kandalaksha, about 200 kilometres south of Murmansk and only 150 kilometres from the Finnish border.

The main aim of the attack

would have been to prevent British and United States weapons and equipment, which reached the USSR on the Arctic Convoys, from being forwarded to the fighting fronts. Fortunately

for the Soviets the attack never happened: the Germans concentrated on the drive towards the Caucasus which would eventually lead to the decisive battle at Stalingrad.

Lagarde, Paul Anton de (1827 - 1891)

German orientalist and political thinker whose ideas did much to shape National Socialism. Born Paul de Bötticher, he changed his name to Lagarde in 1857. Educated in Evangelical theology and philology, he was a noted scholar of linguistics. But he was also an essayist who advocated a form of national Christianity, purged of antique ideas, that would unite Germany. Lagarde blamed what he saw as a decline in morals on industrialisation and

the uncontrolled profit-seeking of capitalism.

He demonstrated a new kind of *volkisch* anti-Semitism, distinct from the church-inspired hatred of the past. Lagarde's theory called for an end to the economic and spiritual powers of the Jews, who he claimed were 'purveyors of decadence', foreign bodies in the state, a nation within a nation. Condemning any 'humanitarian principles' in dealing with Jews he said, "One

does not have dealings with pests and parasites; one does not rear and cherish them; one destroys them as speedily and thoroughly as possible". Lagarde was looked on as a spiritual predecessor by the Nazis.

Right: Lagarde's work was published under the Third Reich. According Karl August Fischer, who edited his collected essays, Lagarde was "the most powerful herald of German National Socialist ideas".



Lammers, Hans Heinrich (1879 - 1962)

Jurist, Reich Minister and head of the Reich Chancellery. Lammers was born at Lublinitz, Upper Silesia. A rural judge before 1914, he volunteered for active service in the First World War. After the war he held a senior post in the Interior Ministry, even though as a right-wing nationalist he was opposed to the Weimar government. Lammers joined the NSDAP in 1932, and in 1933 became head of the Reich Chancellery. He was part of the inner circle that met at Hitler's summer retreat at Obersalzberg. During the war he lost influence,

especially to Martin Bormann, but from 1943 he along with Bormann and Field Marshal Keitel formed the Committee of Three. This was set up to take the load of running Germany off the Führer. On 23 April 1945 Lammers advised Goering that he should take over the country since Hitler had lost control in Berlin. When Hitler heard this news from Bormann he ordered that the Reichsmarshal and Lammers should be arrested. At Nuremberg Lammers pleaded that he knew nothing of the anti-Semitic programme of the Third

Reich. "I knew that a Führer order was transmitted by Goering to Heydrich. This order was called the 'Final Solution of the Jewish Problem'. But I knew nothing of it." Lammers was given a prison sentence of 20 years, but this was reduced to ten years in 1951 and he was released in 1954.

Right: As head of the Reich Chancellery Hans Lammers was responsible for framing legislature and for coordinating the various Reich ministries. Reporting directly to Hitler, he was highly influential in the years before war broke out.



Land

German word for country or state. Used under the Weimar republic to describe the constituent parts of the German Reich, based on the independent states of which Germany had

been composed until the unifications of the 19th century. Until 1933 each of the *Länder* had its own parliaments, constitutions and laws. Any items of national or international

interest were dealt with by the *Reichsrat* or National Council. Under the Third Reich the 17 states retained the name *Länder*, but by 1934 the concentration of power by the National Socialists

in the process of *Gleichschaltung* saw them lose any remaining sovereign rights. In the Nazi political system each *Land* was administered by a *Reichsstatthalter*.

Landsberg am Lech

A medieval town in Bavaria, about 50 kilometres west of Munich. The town is best known as the place where Adolf Hitler was imprisoned after the abortive Beer Hall Putsch. The prison was built in 1909 in the style of a medieval castle and was designated a *Festung* or fortress. In the penal system of the time the term signifies a place of 'honourable' detainment suitable, for example, for incarcerating a duelist committed for homicide.

Hitler was sentenced to five years, though he served less than one. While in Landsberg Hitler wore his own clothes, was provided with his own rooms and diet and was allowed free association with the 40 Nazis who had been imprisoned with him. He had as many visitors as he wanted. It was in Landsberg that he began to write *Mein Kampf* or

'My Struggle', the book that encapsulated his political philosophy. He dictated the work to his fellow prisoner and secretary Rudolf Hess. Hitler was incarcerated on 11 November 1923 and was released early on 20 December 1924.

After World War II, Nazi war criminals were held in Landsberg, and executions were carried out in the castle courtyard. The last executions of those condemned at Nuremberg – six *Einsatzgruppen* commanders – were carried out there in 1951.

Right: Reichschancellor and Nazi Führer Adolf Hitler revisits Festung Landsberg ten years after the Beerhall Putsch.

See also Secret Hitler Files
Issue 15: Hitler's Putsch



Langbehn, Julius (1851 - 1907)

Writer and intellectual forerunner of Hitler and the Nazis. Langbehn was born at Hadersleben in March 1851. He was a racist who believed that the Aryans were destined to dominate the world and that the German Nordic was "the Aryan par excellence". Langbehn's book, 'Rembrandt as teacher: by a German,' held the Dutch master to be an exemplar of 'truth and naturalness' and

was to be preferred to the materialist, scientific spirit of the age - which he called 'Americanism'. His cultural conservatism and belief in folk art were similar to those of Lagarde, de Gobineau and Houston Chamberlain and were later adopted by Hitler and the Nazis. The book on Rembrandt was reprinted 85 times during the Nazi era, and a posthumously-

published book entitled *Dürer als Führer* - Dürer as leader - was almost as popular. The only fly in the ointment as far as the Nazis were concerned was that in his last years Langbehn became a devout Catholic.

Right: The key to Langbehn's philosophy was his belief that modern man had lost the mystic connection with the land experienced by his ancestors.



League of Nations

Established in January 1920 by the victorious Allies, the League of Nations was created as the world's first supra-national body whose stated object was to keep international peace and provide an arbitration body in disputes. Though the League was the idea of the US President Wilson, the USA did not join. Germany was admitted following the Locarno Pact and given a permanent seat on the Council in September 1925. Nationalists in Germany saw the League as an agency of the Allies for enforcing the Versailles territorial settlements.

Hitler took Germany out of the League in October 1933 and began re-armament.

Without American support the League was an ineffective organisation, failing to stop Italy's attack on Ethiopia and Albania, the Japanese invasion of China, the German annexation of Austria and Czechoslovakia or the Spanish Civil War. It survived in name until 1946.

Right: A meeting of the League of Nations in Geneva. In spite of the ideals surrounding its foundation, the League proved to be a failure.



Lebensborn

Lebensborn or the 'Fountain of Life' was originally a social welfare system for SS members, though it grew to become an organisation dedicated to providing racially pure Germans. Reichsführer Heinrich Himmler, mindful of the fact that the 'sub-human' Slavs outnumbered and outbred Aryans, insisted that it was the duty of every SS man to father at least four children by women of suitably Aryan pedigree. In a period when contraception and abortion were illegal and divorce had increased, Himmler considered marriage to be unimportant - it was the bloodline which mattered.

To foster childbirth, 13 *Lebensborn* homes were created

to provide cheap maternity care. They varied in size from Heim Alpenland, which had a medical staff of one nurse to the Home at Taunus which had 22 nurses and midwives.

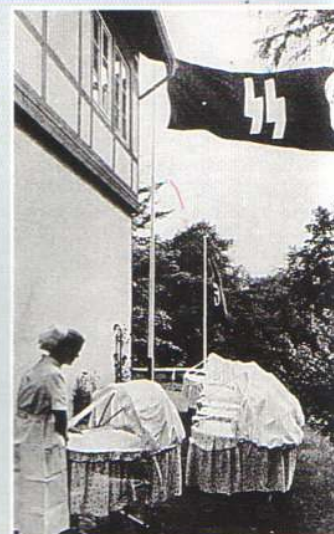
Although the specially provided homes should have given first-rate conditions for SS parents, an investigation by SS researcher Richard Korherr showed that they encouraged no higher an Aryan birth rate than the current German national average. Worse still, the 8 per cent infant mortality at the *Lebensborn* homes was higher than the national average of 6 per cent. This may have been because the staff were selected more for their political acceptability rather than

for their qualifications in midwifery and child care.

The *Lebensborn* homes were also used to provide a human 'stud' service. Racially pure women could go to be impregnated by specially-selected *Zeugungshelfer* or 'Procreation helpers'

Right: A *Lebensborn* nurse wheels some of the infants born in the home out for their daily dose of fresh air. The homes looked after mother and child for up to a year after birth, until a suitably Aryan foster home could be found.

**See also Inside the Third Reich
Issue 1: Lebensborn**



Lebensraum

'Living space' was a key slogan of German expansionist movement. It first came into use in the late 19th Century, as the new German Reich sought to create a colonial empire. The term was used in print by the scholar Friederich Ratzel, and was a major feature in the new study of Geopolitics created after World War I by former general turned professor Karl Haushofer.

As early as 1919 Adolf Hitler stated that Germany needed more land to support its growing population. The Nazi theory of Aryan racial superiority over Slavs pointed to Poland and Russia as the obvious place where *Lebensraum* could be created - in that early speech Hitler noted that "18 times more space is available to each Russian than to each German".

Hitler felt that it was the duty of the 'master race' to displace the 'sub-human' Slavs - preferably by force. Once they had been removed, the land could be populated and worked by German settlers. The SS *Rasse- und Siedlungshauptamt* or RuSHA - the Central Office for Race and Resettlement - was established to ensure that conquered lands in the east were

settled by suitably Aryan farmer/soldiers.

The acquisition of *Lebensraum* was possibly the primary driving force behind Nazi foreign policy and the decision to go to war. To the end of his life, Adolf Hitler believed in the struggle for *Lebensraum*: in his political testament of 1945, he called it 'the central reason for the existence of National Socialism.'

COMING IN THE NEXT VOLUMES OF **HITLER'S** Third Reich

SECRET HITLER FILES

Hitler at home
Hitler's Putsch



THE HOLOCAUST

Deportations
Majdanek Death Camp



HITLER'S HENCHMEN

Julius Streicher
Doenitz: The last Führer

HITLER'S WAR MACHINE

Pistols and smgs
Fallschirmjäger
V-Weapons



INSIDE THE REICH

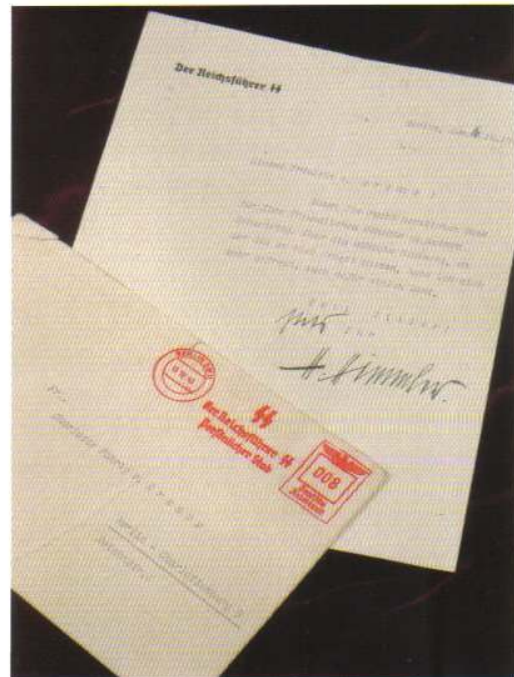
Führer worship
Propaganda
Hitler's rivals

NAZI HORRORS

Life and death in the camps
Eugenics and Euthanasia
Non-Jewish genocide

NAZI SYMBOLS

The Swastika
Sicherheitsdienst
Afrika Korps



A-TO-Z OF THE THIRD REICH



IN THIS VOLUME OF **HITLER'S** **Third Reich**

SECRET HITLER FILES

Hatred of the Jews lay at the heart of Adolf Hitler's world view. But why did a man who seemed to get on with Jews in Vienna before World War I turn into a rabid anti-Semite?

INSIDE THE THIRD REICH

The Hitler Youth was the means by which the Nazis warped the lives of an entire generation of German children



THE HOLOCAUST

Buchenwald, near the German cultural centre at Weimar, was one of the largest of all Nazi concentration camps.

HITLER'S WAR MACHINE

The Wehrmacht's Panzer arm was the sharp spearhead which won Hitler's early victories. The first time the Führer saw them on exercise he said "That's what I want! That's what I must have!"



INSIDE THE THIRD REICH: HITLER'S HENCHMEN

Alfred Jodl and Wilhelm Keitel were the Führer's chief military advisers, and had a hand in planning most of the German campaigns of World War II

NAZI SYMBOLS

NSKK:

The Nazi motor corps



NAZI HORRORS

Vengeful German reprisals for the assassination of Reinhard Heydrich saw SS and police units liquidate the Czech town of Lidice

